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THE
CHILDREN OF THE ABBEY.

A TALE.

BY

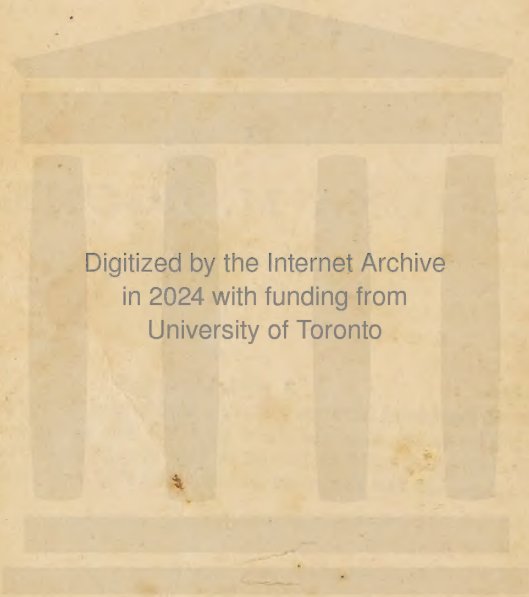
REGINA M. ROCHE.

A matchless pair
With equal virtues form'd, and equal grace;
The same distinguished by their sex alone;
Hers the mild radiance of the blooming morn,
And his the radiance of the risen day.—THOMPSON.

HALIFAX:

MILNER AND SOWERBY.

1863.



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THE CHILDREN OF THE ABBEY.

CHAPTER I.

Yellow sheafs from rich Ceres the cottage had crown'd,
Green rushes were strewed on the floor,
The casements sweet woodbine crept wantonly round,
And deck'd the sod seats at the door. *Cunningham.*

HAIL, sweet asylum of my infancy! Hail ye---venerable trees! my happiest hours of childish gaiety were passed beneath your shelter—then careless as the birds that sung upon your boughs, I laughed the hours away, nor knew of evil.

Here shall I be guarded from duplicity. Here may I wait till the storm of sorrow is past, and my father's arms are again expanded to receive me.

Such were Amanda's words, as the chaise (hired on quitting the mail) turned down a lane, almost darkened by old trees, whose interwoven branches allowed her scarce a glimpse of her nurse's cottage, till she had reached the door.

The nurse and her husband, who had been watching for the arrival of their fondling, assisted her to alight, and the former half stifled her with caresses, the latter respectfully kissed her hand. "Lort," he said, "what an alteration a few years had made in her." Then he enquired how his tear old captain was, and Mr. Oscar,—and whether the latter was not grown a very fine youth. Amanda smiling through her tears, endeavoured to answer him; and when he went to assist the young man (who had travelled with her from London,) with her luggage, her head sunk upon her nurse's bosom; "My dear faithful nurse;" she sobbed, "your poor child is again returned to seek an asylum from you." "And she is heartily

welcome," replied she, crying, "and I have got every thing so nice and comfortable, that the greatest lady in the land need not disdain your apartment; and here are two little girls, and I, always ready to serve and obey you. This is Ellen, your foster-sister, and this Betsey, the baby when you left—and I have besides, two as fine lads as you could wish to see; they are now at work, but will soon be here." Amanda affectionately embraced the two girls, and was then conducted into a little parlour, which with an adjoining bed-room, was for her use. And now the nurse hurried from Amanda to prepare her dinner, the chicken was down in a minute; Ellen tied the asparagus, Betsey laid the cloth, whilst Edwin entertained Amanda's travelling companion in the kitchen.

Dinner, in Amanda's opinion, was served in a minute; but her heart was too full to eat, though pressed to do so with the utmost tenderness, which in truth was the means of overcoming her.

Her nurse's sons soon returned; and she spoke to the companions of her infant sports, with the most engaging affability; and had her father been with her, she would have been happy.

It was now about the middle of June, and the whole country was glowing with luxuriant beauty. The cottage was in reality a commodious farm-house; situated in North Wales, and the romantic scenery surrounding it, was highly pleasing to a disposition like Amanda's. The farm-yard at the back was stocked with poultry and rural implements; a craggy precipice hung over the garden, covered with flowers, thyme, and other herbs, which afforded browse to three or four playful goats; a silver stream trickled down the precipice, and fell with a gentle murmur into the valley. Beneath a projection of the rock a natural recess was formed, thickly lined with moss, and surrounded with flowers.

These scenes Amanda but faintly remembered.

Peculiar circumstances had driven her from the

shelter of a parent's arms, to seek security in retirement at this abode of simplicity and peace. Here the perturbation of fear subsided; but the soft melancholy of her soul at times was heightened, when she reflected that in this very place an unfortunate mother had expired in giving her birth.

Amanda was now about nineteen; description could never convey a full idea of the ineffable sweetness of her face, or the striking elegance and beautiful proportion of her person: nor was her mind inferior to the form that enshrined it.

Though the rose upon her cheek was pale, and the lustre of her eye was fled, she was from these circumstances (if less dazzling to the eye) more affecting to the heart. Her agonized parent witnessing this change, sent her into Wales, as much for health as security; she was ordered goat's whey, and gentle exercise; but she believed, that consolation on her father's account could alone effect a cure.

She now exerted her spirits in gratitude to her humble, but benevolent friends; the tea-things, by her desire, were carried into the recess in the garden.

The scene was delightful, and well calculated to banish all sadness but despair, and Amanda was too much the child of piety ever to have felt its baneful influence. She enjoyed the innocent gaiety and harmless jest. The declining sun now gave softer beauties to the scenery, the lowing of the cattle, the carol of the peasant, and the hummings of the bees, now returning home, were heard, when to complete the concert, a blind harper strolled into the garden and began to play.

The venerable appearance of the musician, the simple melody of his harp, recalled to Amanda the tales of other times, in which she had so much delighted; it sent her soul back to the days of other years, when bards rehearsed the exploits of heroes, and sung the praises of the dead.

The sweet enthusiasm which arose in Amanda's

mind, her careful nurse soon put an end to, by reminding her of the heavy dew then falling. Amanda would have staid for hours in the garden; but she immediately accompanied her nurse into the house. She soon withdrew to her chamber, attended by the nurse and her two daughters, who all thought their services requisite; and it was not without much difficulty she persuaded them to the contrary.

Left to solitiude, a tender awe stole over the mind of Amanda, when she reflected that in this very room her mother had expired. She went to the bed and knelt beside it. She prayed with all the fervency of devotion; and arose tranquil and animated. She went to the window, and raising the white calico curtain, looked down the moon-lit valley. All was still as if creation slept upon the bosom of serenity. Amanda at length dropt the curtain, and sought repose; it soon blest her eyelids, and shed sweet oblivion over all her cares.

CHAPTER II.

Canst thou bear cold and hunger? Can these limbs,
 Fram'd for the tender offices of love,
 Endure the bitter gripes of smarting poverty?
 When in a bed of straw we shrink together,
 And the bleak winds shall whistle round our heads,
 Wilt thou talk to me thus,
 Thus hush my cares, and shelter me with love?

Otway.

FITZALAN, Amanda's father, was of an ancient Irish family which had, however, attained its summit of prosperity long ere his entrance into life. By his parents dying, he early became sole master of the little sum they had been enabled to save for him, their only child; which he laid out in the purchase of a commission.

The war between France and America had just commenced: and Fitzalan's regiment was among the first forces sent to aid the former.

He had once the good fortune to save the life of a British soldier ; and this action, performed at imminent hazard of his own, secured the lasting, unbounded gratitude of the soldier, whose name was Edwin ; the same that now afforded an asylum to his daughter.

Edwin having committed some juvenile fault, which highly incensed his parents, enlisted to escape their anger ; but he did not like his new mode of life, and having entered, at his own request, Fitzalan's service, the latter promised, on his return to Europe, to intercede with his friends for him.

During his stay abroad, Fitzalan was promoted to a captain-lieutenancy : his pay was his only support, which of necessity checked his benevolent soul.

On the regiment's return to Europe, he obtained Edwin's discharge. And accompanied him to Wales, where his parents, having lost their remaining two children, now received him as the only hope of their old age.

Nor was his protector forgotten ; tears filled his eyes, when he recognised their reconciliation.

He now accompanied his regiment into Scotland, being quartered in a remote part of that kingdom.

Near the port was a fine old Abbey belonging to the family of Dunreath : the present Earl, now advanced in years, had married twice, in hopes of a male heir to his estates, and was twice disappointed. His first lady died giving birth to a daughter. She had taken under her protection a young female, left destitute by her family, who on her patroness' demise, retired to a relation's house. The Earl used to her society, felt this double loss. And as he ever followed the dictates of inclination, ere the term of mourning was expired, he proposed and was accepted.

The fair orphan, now mistress of the Abbey, no longer checked her vain propensities. Her soul was unfeeling and ambitious, and she now unmasked her hitherto disguised passions.

She soon gained an absolute ascendancy over her lord.

Forgetful of her kind patroness, she used her child with the cruelest neglect, which increased on the birth of her own daughter, as she could not bear that Augusta should only share the affection and estates of her father. She continued by degrees, to deprive Malvina of the former and hoped too of the latter.

The child thus looked dejected and unhappy; which Lady Dunreath persuaded the Earl was sulkingness and ill-humour. Her own child unrestrained in all her wishes, was a constant amusement to the Earl. Malvina, ere she knew the meaning of sorrow, thus became its prey; but in spite of this, she grew up with all the graces of mind and form that had distinguished her mother.

Augusta was also a fine figure; but possessed not the graces of elegance and mind of her sister, always decorated with the most studied art, she seemed to demand and expect universal homage.

The warriors of the fort were welcome visitants at the Abbey, which Lady Dunreath contrived to render a scene of almost constant gaiety.

Lord Dunreath was now generally confined to his own room, but his mind was still vigorous as ever.

The first appearance of the officers at the Abbey, was at a ball given by Lady Dunreath, to celebrate their arrival; all was splendour and magnificence, and the unusual gaiety of the company gave the spirits of Malvina an agreeable flutter they had never known before; and a deeper blush than usual to her cheek.

The young co-heiresses were much admired by the officers. Malvina, as the eldest, opened the ball with the Colonel; her form had attracted the eyes of Fitzalan, and vainly he attempted to withdraw them, till Augusta's conversation, who honoured him with her hand, obliged him to turn them upon herself, when he came to turn Malvina, he involuntarily detained her hand for a moment; her blush agitated his whole soul.

When partners were changed, he seized the first

opportunity to engage her hand; her conversation now captivated his heart as her form had his eyes.

He had never met so lovely an object; he could not continue the lively strain of conversation he had done with her sister; his heart would not admit of trifling.

Fitzalan was now in the meridian of manhood, in stature above the common size, his features elegant, his forehead was fair, a soul of tenderness was in his eyes, and his smile sweet as that of a woman.

The dance with Malvina over, Augusta engrossed him for the rest of the evening, she thought him the handsomest man in the room, and would not allow him to avoid her; and his brother officers thus entered him on the list of her adorers.

He did not delude himself, he knew the obstacles between him and Malvina were insuperable; but his heart was too proud to complain of fate.

His visits to the Abbey became constant; Augusta took them to herself, and encouraged them. She had generally a levee of red coats every morning in her dressing-room. Malvina seldom appeared, for she was mostly engaged reading to her father at this time, or detained in her own room, or among the rocks on the sea-shore.

One morning as Fitzalan was going through the gallery to Augusta's dressing-room, he observed two beautiful portraits of the Earl's daughters, placed there that morning.

Lady Augusta was reclining in an alcove; surrounded by little cupids strewing roses on her pillow.

Lady Malvina was drawn as a peasant girl, by a little brook, surrounded by her flock and faithful dog.

"Beautiful portrait!" cried Fitzalan, "sweet resemblance of the seraphic form!"

He heard a soft sigh behind him: he started, turned and saw Malvina; "How beautiful!" he faltered, looking at Augusta's. "Yes," said Malvina, and led the way to her sister's dressing-room.

Lady Augusta was spangling some ribbon, but she threw it down as he entered, she asked if he had been admiring her picture. He replied he had, and snatching up a knot of the ribbon, declared it a talisman against all future impressions, when stealing a glance at Malvina he saw her eyes fixed on him, and a deadly palor on her face.

His spirits vanished, and he left immediately. Malvina's dejection touched his heart. In the evening he strolled upon the shore among the rocks. The scene was wild and solemn. Fitzalan pursued his way in deep and melancholy meditation, from which the melting air of a Scotch song aroused him. He looked towards the spot whence the sound proceeded, and beheld Malvina standing upon a rock, her white dress fluttering in the wind, and her dishevelled hair around her like one of Ossian's own creatures. Fitzalan stepped softly behind her: he saw her weep as she sang, and when she ceased, she sighed, "Ah my mother, why was Malvina left behind you!"

"To bless and improve mankind!" cried Fitzalan.

She screamed and had fallen, but he caught her in his arms: "And why," cried he, "should Lady Malvina give way to melancholy, when she is surrounded by everything requisite to constitute happiness?"

"Appearances are deceitful," said Malvina, (forgetting she had never before hinted the ill-treatment she received,) "as I alas! too fatally experience, how willingly would I resign all for privacy and real friendship!"

"And who," cried Fitzalan, "can know Lady Malvina without feeling this friendship for her virtues, and sympathy for her sorrows?" As he spoke, he pressed her hand against his heart, she felt her sister's knot of ribbon. She withdrew her hand, and said to him haughtily, "Captain Fitzalan, you were going, I believe, to Lady Augusta, do not let me detain you."

Fitzalan tore the ribbon from his breast and flung it in the sea. "Going to Augusta," he exclaimed, "and is her lovely sister then deceived?" Malvina blushed and trembled. "Fitzalan," cried she, "I hate deceit."

"And I too," said he, "but why should I endeavour to prove my sincerity, when I know it is so immaterial? I am not aspiring, though susceptible." They then proceeded in silence to the Abbey gate, he wished her good night; "shall we not soon see you at the Abbey?" exclaimed she. "No my lovely friend," cried Fitzalan, "in future I shall confine myself to the fort," he kissed her hand and retired.

Lady Malvina repaired to her chamber in such a tumult of pleasure as she had never before experienced. Hitherto she had been the slave of tyranny and caprice; she was now agitated and delighted; and waited patiently for a further explanation of Fitzalan's sentiments.

Far different were his feelings from hers: when he reflected upon his hopeless situation. Of a union he dare not think, since he could not flatter himself that the Earl would ever pardon such a step. He therefore determined, as much as possible, to avoid her. By degrees Fitzalan discontinued his visits to the Abbey. And though he often met Malvina at parties in the neighbourhood, he cautiously avoided her.

The disappointment this conduct gave rise to, was too much for the tender heart of Malvina. Society grew irksome; and she became more than ever attached to solitary rambles.

It was within a week of the garrison's leaving Scotland, when Malvina one evening repaired to the rock where Fitzalan had disclosed his tenderness; a similarity of feeling led him there; he sat down by Malvina; after a pause, Malvina exclaimed, "You go then, Fitzalan, never, I suppose, to return again." "'Tis probable I may not," said he. "Then we shall

never meet again," cried she, while a tear stole down her lovely cheek.

"Yes my lovely friend," said he, "we shall meet again in that heaven which shall recompense all our sufferings." "You are melancholy to-night," cried Malvina in a voice scarcely audible.

"Oh! can you wonder at it?" exclaimed he, forgetting all his resolutions, "when I know not but this is the last time I shall see the only woman I ever loved?"

Malvina could no longer restrain her feelings; she sank upon his shoulder, and wept. "Good heavens," cried Fitzalan, "what a cruel situation is mine. But, Malvina, I cannot, will not plunge you into destruction. I have no income but that derived from my profession. Our separation is therefore, alas! inevitable."

"Oh! no," exclaimed Malvina, "the difficulties you mention will vanish. My father's affections were early alienated from me; and I believe he will be glad of an excuse to leave his possessions to Augusta. But," continued she, "I am sure he will not be unnatural to me; and though he may withhold affluence. I am sure he will allow me a competence; nay, Lady Dunreath I believe, in pleasure at my removal, would, if he hesitated, become my intercessor."

The energy with which Malvina spoke, convinced Fitzalan of the strength of her affection, the suggestions of love triumphed over prudence and every other consideration, and folding her to his heart, he asked would she, at all events, unite her destiny to his.

Malvina blushed, and faltered a willing consent.

The means of accomplishing their wishes now occupied their minds. Fitzalan resolved to entrust the chaplain of the regiment with the affair. Malvina promised to meet them the ensuing evening in the Abbey chapel, with her maid, on whom she thought she could rely.

It was settled that Fitzalan should pay a visit next

morning to the Abbey, and give Malvina a certain sign if he succeeded with the chaplain.

The next morning Malvina brought her work into her sister's room; at last Fitzalan came, and was attacked by Augusta for his long absence. After trifling some time with her, he gave Malvina the signal.

A crimson glow was suddenly succeeded by a deadly paleness; Fitzalan purposely bent over her sister, and thus gave her an opportunity of retiring unnoticed from the room. And after many promises of secrecy, she revealed all to her maid. It was long past midnight ere Malvina could attempt to repair to the chapel; when she at last rose for that purpose, a kind of horror chilled her heart; but when she reflected upon the noble generosity of Fitzalan, her hesitation was over, and she repaired to the chapel.

This was a wild and gloomy structure, and the light the maid held heightened its gloom.

"They are not here," said Malvina, she went to the door but could only hear the rustling of the trees. She turned from it and sunk upon the steps of the altar. A low murmur reached her ears; the door opened, and Fitzalan and the chaplain entered: they had been watching for the light, and a few minutes made her the wife of Fitzalan.

She had not courage, till within a day or two of the regiment leaving Scotland, to acquaint the Earl: the Countess knew it already, and rejoiced at the prospect of her ruin, as the means of increasing her own daughter's fortune; and she had feared that the attachment Augusta had formed for Fitzalan, would have precipitated her into the step her sister had just taken.

Augusta really loved Fitzalan, and cursed her sister in the bitterness of her heart; and joined her mother in working up the Earl, who at last refused to pardon Malvina, and bid her never more appear in his presence.

She now began to tread the thorny path of life.

The first year she had a son, who was called after her father, Oscar Dunreath: four years after, their debts were so increased, that Fitzalan was compelled to sell out on half pay. Lady Malvina now expected an addition to her family; her situation, she hoped, would move her father's heart, she thus prevailed upon her husband to carry her to Scotland.

They lodged at a peasant's house near the Abbey, the Earl's infirmities increased daily, and Lady Augusta was just married to the Marquis of Rosiline. He had passionately admired Malvina and on her marriage he went abroad, but at his return, his avarice was gratified at the possessions of the sole heiress of Dunreath.

The day after their arrival Lady Malvina sent little Oscar, with the old peasant, to the Abbey with a letter for the Earl, in which she described her situation and besought him to let the uplifted hand of innocence plead her cause. The peasant waited till Lady Dunreath went out in her carriage: and was then conducted to the Earl, whom he found alone. The Earl frowned and looked agitated; but was not so displeased as the peasant had expected. He refused however to accept the letter; little Oscar now ran forward and exclaimed. "Ah! pray do---take poor Mama's letter." The Earl took it: as he read, a tear dropped from him. "Poor Mama cries too," said Oscar. "Why did she send you to me?" said the Earl. "Because she said you were my grandpapa, and bids me love, and pray for you every day." "Heaven bless you," said the Earl, patting him on the head. At this moment Lady Dunreath rushed into the room; a favourite had followed and related what was going forward, the Earl knew her violent temper and dismissed the peasant with the child. The account of his reception bid his mother expect a kind summons from the Abbey, but no such summons came. The next morning the child was sent to it, but was refused admittance. Frightened at this rudeness, the child re-

turned weeping to his mother. The evening was far advanced, when suddenly starting up, "I will go," she cried. "I will again try to melt his obduracy."

She would not allow Fitzalan to attend her, but proceeded on the peasant's arm. She would not be repulsed at the door, but forced her way into the hall, here Lady Dunreath met her, and refused her access to her father, declaring it was by his desire she did so.

"Let me see him but a moment," she cried.

"Turn this frantic woman from the Abbey," said Lady Dunreath. Her order was instantly obeyed, though it was a night when one would not have turned an enemy's dog from the door.

Fitzalan watched for her at the door: she rushed into his arms, and fainted; it was long ere she showed any symptoms of returning life. In Malvina's situation, Fitzalan dreaded the loss of her life, should they continue where they were; but whither could he take her, wanderer as he was upon the face of the earth? At length the faithful Edwin occurred to his recollections. He immediately procured a conveyance, and the next morning Malvina bid a last adieu to Scotland.

Lady Dunreath, in the mean time suffered terror: after she had seen Malvina turned from the door, she returned to her apartment; it was furnished with luxurious elegance, yet could she not rest within it. The tempest shook the battlements of the Abbey. The visions of the night were also dreadful. Malvina appeared expiring before her, and the late Lady Dunreath reproaching her barbarity.---"Oh cruel," the ghastly figure seemed to say, "is it you who have driven forth my child a forlorn and wretched wanderer?"

The unfortunate travellers were welcomed with the truest hospitality by Edwin, he had married, and his parents' little patrimony had devolved on him. Fitzalan hoped Malvina would here regain her health and peace, he intended to endeavour to be put on full pay; and trusted she would continue at the farm.

At length she gave him a daughter; she lived after its birth but a few minutes.

Fitzalan's feelings cannot well be described; he continued some time in perfect stupefaction. His grief was not outrageous: but of that kind which cannot vent itself in tears.

It was when he saw them removing her that all the tempest of his grief broke forth. Oh! it is impossible to describe the anguish of this poor widower's heart, when he returned from seeing his Malvina laid in her last receptacle: he shut himself up in the room where she had expired, and ordered no one to approach him.

She was interred in the village church-yard: at the head of the gravestone was rudely cut

MALVINA FITZALAN,

Alike lovely and beautiful.

Fitzalan would not permit her empty title to be on it; "She is buried," he said, "as the wife of a wretched soldier, not as the daughter of a wealthy Peer."

Her infant was called after her mother, by the united names of Amanda Malvina. Mrs. Edwin took it to her bosom, sending her own out to nurse.

The money which Fitzalan had procured for his commission, was now nearly exhausted; Malvina was deceased about two months, when a nobleman with whom once he had been intimately acquainted---unsolicited, procured him a company in a regiment, then stationed in England. Four years did he continue in the army, when pining for his children, through the interest of his friend, he sold out; Oscar was then about eight, Amanda four.

He had seen in Devonshire a little romantic solitude, adapted to his taste and finances, he soon became its proprietor. Hither he carried his children, much against the inclination of the Edwins; they went to two day-schools in the neighbourhood, but

the forming of their morals was the pleasing task of their father, and he was amply recompensed, for they grew up all he could desire. As Oscar advanced in life, his father experienced new cares; a military life was what he appeared anxious for. Oscar was about eighteen when the proprietor of the estate, on which his father held his farm, died; his heir, a Colonel in the army, came to take formal possession. He became acquainted with Fitzalan, and one day hearing his anxiety on his son's account, said it was a pity such a fine youth was unprovided for; however he left, without appearing interested about him.

Fitzalan could not purchase a commission for his son, without depriving himself of support. From this inquietude he was unexpectedly relieved by a letter from the Earl of Cherbury, his yet kind friend, informing him that he had procured an ensigncy for Oscar, in Colonel Belgrave's regiment.

Fitzalan's soul was filled with gratitude; he wrote to the Earl and the Colonel, in terms expressive of his feelings, Col. Belgrave received his thanks as if he really deserved them; but such was not the case, he had merely mentioned Fitzalan accidentally; and his inquietude about his son, in Lord Cherbury's presence, who immediately formed the design of serving his old friend.

Oscar soon left for his appointment.

And now all Fitzalan's care devolved upon Amanda; and most amply did she recompense it, her father's happiness seemed her first incentives; and no heart (except a paternal one) can conceive the rapture of her father, as he saw her thus grow up under his forming hand.

Some years elapsed ere Belgrave returned into their neighbourhood; he came soon after his marriage in Ireland, to a lady of that country. He was unaccompanied by his bride, Fitzalan believing him his benefactor, invited him to his house, the invitation was at last accepted; but had he known the at-

traction the house contained he would not have hesitated, for he was a man of most depraved principles.

Amanda was a child when he was last in the country. How great then was his surprise and rapture, when Fitzalan led into the room a tall and elegant girl! He instantly marked her for his prey; and blessed his stars that Fitzalan took him for his benefactor, since this would give him easier access to the house.

He now became almost an inmate of the house; and took every opportunity, unobserved, to win her favours; these opportunities Fitzalan allowed to be frequent; he would as soon have trusted Amanda to Belgrave, as to her brother. Amanda innocently increased his flame, by the attention, out of gratitude, she paid him, and often talked to him of Oscar, and his lady; but was surprised to find he always waved the latter subject.

Belgrave could not long restrain his passion, and one day in a retired walk, he unfolded his designs to Amanda. At first she did not perfectly understand him; but when he explained himself more fully, she turned from him and fled to the house, as if from a monster. Belgrave was provoked; from the softness of her manners, he had counted on an easy conquest.

Poor Amanda would not appear before her father, till she had, in some degree, regained composure, as she feared the smallest intimation might cause fatal consequences. As she sat with him a letter was brought her; she could not think Belgrave would have the effrontery to write to her; but how great was the shock she experienced, on finding it from him. Having thrown off the mask, he determined no longer to assume any disguise. Her paleness and confusion alarmed her father, and he instantly demanded the cause of her agitation. When he had perused the letter, and learnt every particular of the insult she had received, he tenderly embraced her, and then took his hat. It was easy to guess whither

he was going. Amanda rushed after him and fainted on his neck. He left her to the care of a maid, lest her pathetic remonstrances should delay the vengeance he resolved to take on the wretch; but Belgrave was not to be found.

Scarcely had Fitzalan returned ere a letter was brought from the wretch, in which he made the most degrading proposals; and bade Fitzalan beware how he answered them, as his situation had put him entirely in his power. This was a fatal truth, as he was now considerably in arrears. The ungenerous advantage he strove to take of his situation, increased if possible, his indignation; again he sought him, but still without success.

Belgrave finding temptation of no avail, resolved to try what adversity would do, and left, having first ordered immediate proceedings against Fitzalan.

His effects were immediately seized on; and, but for the assistance of a good-natured farmer, he had been arrested. By his means, and under favour of night, he and Amanda set out for London; there they retired to obscure lodgings. Fitzalan wrote to Lord Cherbury, entreating him to procure him some employment. He cautiously concealed everything relative to Belgrave. Oscar's safety he knew depended on his secrecy; as, he was convinced no danger nor elevation would secure the wretch from his fury.

Lord Cherbury's letter was returned, he being in France, nor was he expected back for some months.

Some of these wretched months had lingered away when Fitzalan resolved to send Amanda into Wales, her health having suffered considerably.

Belgrave had traced the fugitives; and found means to convey letters to Amanda, full of base solicitations, declaring the rigour he treated her father with should instantly be withdrawn if he acceded to the proposals he made for her.

But though Fitzalan had determined to send Aman-

da into Wales, with whom could he trust her? At last he recollected the son of the worthy farmer who had assisted him in his journey to London; he came often to town, and always called upon Fitzalan. The young man expressed the greatest readiness to accompany Miss Fitzalan. Her father made her take the name of Dunford and travel in the mail, for greater security. He saw her depart with mingled pain and pleasure; promising to inform her of Lord Cherbury's arrival, which he supposed, would fix his destiny. He had informed the Edwins of her intended visit, and also change of name for the present. This latter event excited their curiosity and not liking to ask Amanda, they sifted her companion who hesitated not to inform them of Col. Belgrave's treatment, which was well known in their neighbourhood.

CHAPTER. III.

—Thy grave shall with fresh flowers be dress'd,
 And the green turf lie lightly on thy breast:
 There shall the morn her earliest tear bestow,
 There the first roses of the year shall blow. *Pope.*

A GENTLE noise roused Amanda from her sleep, and she beheld her nurse standing by her bed-side, with a bowl of goat's-whey. She took the draught with a smile, and starting up, was dressed in a few minutes.

On going out she found the family all busy; Edwin and his two sons were mowing in a meadow near the house, nurse was churning, Ellen washing the milk pails, and Betsey turning a cake for her breakfast.

Amanda was delighted with all she saw, and wrote to her father, that his presence was only wanting. The young man who had attended her, on receiving her letter, returned to London.

Amanda passed the morning arranging her affairs, and conversing with the nurse relative to past times and present avocations.

In the evening she asked Ellen to take a walk with her, to which she joyfully consented, "And pray Miss," said she, "where shall we go?" "To the church yard," replied Amanda.---"Oh! Lord, Miss; wont that be rather a dismal place?"—"Indulge me, dear Ellen," said Amanda, "there is one spot in it my heart wants to visit."

The church-yard lay at the entrance of the village, and its lofty elms and yews cast dark shades upon the spots where the "rude forefathers of the hamlet slept" which

"With uncouth rhymes and shapeless sculpture deck'd,
Implo'r'd the passing tribute of a tear."

And it was a tribute Amanda paid, as she passed to the grave of Lady Malvina; she sunk involuntarily on her knees, and kissed the hallowed earth, and prayed. Ellen wept, and besought her to continue no longer in such a dismal place.

Amanda now rose weeping; and in the calm solitude of the evening, her father's ill health and her sorrows revived in her remembrance.

Her melancholy was noticed at the cottage, and her kind nurse exerted herself to enliven her, but she was not to be cheered, and soon retired to bed.

Returning light, in some degree, dispelled her melancholy; but deprived as she was of her books, implements of drawing, and musical instruments, lost in the distraction of her father's affairs, she found the time would hang heavy on her hands; and in the cottage were only a Bible, family prayer book, and a volume of ballads.

"Tear heart, now I think on't," said the nurse, "you may go to the library at Tudor Hall. The family are all away; you will not be noticed by nobody going into it; though, for that matter, poor old Mrs. Abergwilly would make you welcome enough, if you would promise to take none of the books away with you. But I will step over and ask

her leave for you to go.”—“If you please,” said Amanda, “I should not like to go without it.”---“Well, I shant be long,” continued the nurse, “it will be a pretty walk for you every morning, and Ellen shall shew you to-day.”

The nurse returned with Mrs. Abergwilly’s permission for Amanda to go whenever she pleased. In consequence of this, she immediately went to the Hall. The library was on the ground-floor, and entered by a folding-door. As soon as she had reached it, Ellen returned to the cottage; and Amanda began with pleasure to examine the apartment, whose elegance and simplicity struck her with admiration.

Opposite the entrance was another folding-door, which being a little opened, Amanda could not resist the desire of seeing what was beyond. She entered a large vaulted apartment. The manner in which it was fitted up, and the musical instruments, declared this to be a music-room.

Amanda stood long at a window, enjoying the delightful prospect it presented. She saw a piano unlocked, and found the keys in tolerable order. Amanda adored music, nor could she resist the present opportunity of gratifying her favorite inclination. She sat down and played a tender air; those her father loved recurred to her recollection. “Ah dear and valued object,” she sighed, “why are you not here to share my pleasure?” she wiped away a starting tear, and sang a little air.

Amanda returned to the library, and soon selected a book for perusal, and seated herself in the recess of a window. Here she forgot the progress of time, till Ellen appeared with a request from the nurse, for her immediate return, as her dinner was ready, and she was uneasy at her fasting so long.

Amanda resolved to be a constant visitor to the Hall, and a week passed in this manner, during which she heard from her father, who suspecting the woman with whom he lodged, was in Belgrave’s interest, he

proposed changing his abode; and added, Lord Cherbury was daily expected.

CHAPTER IV

Mine eyes where half closed in sleep, soft music came to mine ear: it was like the rising breeze, that whiffs, at first, the thistle's beard, that flies dark shadowy, over the grass.
Ossian.

AMANDA went every morning to the Hall: in the evening she again returned to it; but instead of staying in the library generally took a book from thence and read at the foot of some moss covered tree. When she could no longer see, she returned the book from whence she had taken it, and rambled to the deepest recesses of the grove.

Her health gradually grew better, as the tranquillity of her mind increased; a faint blush again tinged her cheek and her lively eyes beamed a placid lustre.

She returned one evening with one of those unaccountable depressions on her spirits to which, in a greater or less degree, every one is subject. When she retired to bed she dreamt she saw her mother expiring under the greatest torture. From this dream she was roused, by the softest strains of music, and saw a light around her, far exceeding twilight. Her dream had made a deep impression on her, but soon did this emotion give way to that of surprise when she heard outside the window, the following lines from Cowley, sung in a manly and exquisite voice.

“Awake, awake, my lyre,
And tell thy silent master's humble tale
In sounds that may prevail;
Sounds that gentle thoughts inspire;
Tho' so exalted she,
And I so humble be,
Tell her all such different notes make all thy harmony.”

The voice continued to the end. When all again was silent, she drew back the blind, and saw that it

was the moon which cast such a light around her. The remainder of the night was past in ruminating on this incident. She resolved to conceal it, but to make every inquiry the next morning. From those inquiries, the clergyman was the only person whom with any probability, she could fix on; she had never seen him, nor could she conceive how he knew anything of her.

Amanda now deemed it imprudent to go to the Hall: yet she could not relinquish it without the greatest reluctance. At last she considered a companion would remove any appearance of impropriety, and Ellen being generally employed at knitting, thus losing no time, agreed to accompany her.

"While you look over the book," said Ellen, "I will just step away about a little business." She had seen Tim Chip, the carpenter, at work near the Hall, who was the Adonis of those shades; and Ellen his selected nymph.

Amanda sat down to the piano, and played and accompanied the strains of the preceding night. "Heavenly sounds!" exclaimed some one behind her. Amanda started with terror from the chair, and beheld a tall elegant young man standing by it. "Good heaven!" cried she, scarce knowing what she said, "where can Ellen be?"—"And do you think," said the stranger, "I shall let this chance escape without entreating leave to be introduced to you?" As he spoke he gently seized her hand and carried it to his lips. "This chance, sir," said Amanda, "is to me most unpleasant as it has exposed me to such freedom. I insist on being immediately released."

Amanda hurried to the grove; but in her confusion took a wrong path. The stranger followed. "And why," he cried, "so impropitious to my wish of introduction?" Amanda made no reply, but hurried on till compelled to lean against a tree for support. "Fatigue has made you ill," said the stranger, "and 'tis your haste to avoid me has occasioned it."

At this moment Amanda perceived Ellen leaping over a stile. She ran forward, but on seeing the stranger, started back. "I thought you would never come said Amanda." "You go then," said the stranger, taking her hand, "will you not allow me to wait upon you?" "It is impossible," replied Amanda, "I shall be distressed if longer detained." "See then," said he, "like a courteous knight I release you, but think not, cruel fair one, I resign all hopes."

"Oh, Lord!" cried Ellen, how did you meet Lord Mortimer?" "Lord Mortimer?" repeated Amanda. "Yes himself indeed," said Ellen, "and besides that, the young Lord of Tudor Hall." Amanda was greatly flurried on hearing this, for he had found her seated there with as much composure as if possessor of it.

Lord Mortimer followed them half way down the lane; on being observed, he kissed his hand, and retired.

Nurse was quite delighted at her child having been seen by Lord Mortimer. Amanda's heart fluttered with an agreeable sensation, as Ellen described the tender looks with which Lord Mortimer regarded her. She was at first inclined to believe that it was Lord Mortimer, whose melody so agreeably disturbed her slumbers; but a moment's reflection convinced her this belief must be erroneous; it was evident (or she would have heard of it) that Lord Mortimer had only that day arrived at Tudor Hall, again she fixed on the curate as the serenader. Well she was determined, if he ever came in her way, and dropt a hint of attachment, she would immediately crush any hopes he might have the vanity to entertain.

CHAPTER V.

The blossoms op'ning to the day,
The dews of heaven refin'd,
Could nought of purity display,
To emulate his mind.

Goldsmith.

AFTER tea Amanda asked little Betsey to accompany

her in a walk ; Ellen had gone early to a dance. But Amanda did not begin her walk with her usual alacrity ; her bonnet would not do ; she had a hat tied on ; she liked it better, and at last set out ; she was often so absorbed in thought as to start when Betsey addressed her. Scarcely knowing which way they went, they entered the church-yard, and Amanda sat on one of the raised flags to rest.

As she rested she twined a garland of the wild flowers she had gathered with Betsey, and hung it over her mother's grave, and raising her fine eyes to heaven, exclaimed, "Is this the only tribute for me to pay!"

A low murmur startled her ; she turned and saw Lord Mortimer, with a young clergyman, half hid by some trees, attentively observing her. Blushing and confused, she hastened to the cottage.

Lord Mortimer had wandered about the cottage, and seeing the direction Amanda took, followed her ; and just as she entered the church-yard, met the curate. His company, at a moment so propitious, he would have dispensed with ; for he was more anxious than he choose to acknowledge to himself, to become acquainted with her.

Lord Mortimer was now in the prime of life ; his person strikingly elegant ; seducing sweetness dwelt in his smile ; his soul was naturally the seat of every virtue. Among other talents, he possessed an exquisite taste for music ; his spending many years abroad had given him every advantage for cultivating it to the greatest advantage. The melodious voice of Amanda would of itself almost have made a conquest of his heart, but aided by her charms, all was irresistible.

He had come to Wales on purpose to pay a visit to a friend in the Isle of Anglesey : he did not mean to stop at Tudor Hall ; but when near it, his phaeton was overturned, and he much hurt. He put himself in the hands of good old Mrs. Abergwilly ; who, he

believed, would cure his bruises sooner than any country surgeon. He gave strict orders that his being there should not be mentioned. From a room adjoining the music hall he had discovered Amanda. As soon as she was gone he sent for the housekeeper to enquire who the beautiful stranger was. Mrs. Abergwilly only knew she was a young lady lately come from London, to lodge at David Edwin's; but if he pleased she would send Miss Dunford word not to come again. "By no means," said his Lordship. Lord Mortimer grew daily better, and having a tincture of romance, he took a lute, and serenaded his lovely cottage girl; and the next day surprised her as already related.

He and his companion followed Amanda to the church-yard, where, shaded by the trees, they watched her unnoticed, till his lordship's exclamation of rapture discovered them. The inscription on the tomb-stone, from the difference of names, gave no insight into any connection between her and its inmate; Howel knew nothing, he was but lately appointed, and had never seen Amanda till that evening.

Mortimer was anxiously solicitous to learn the real situation of Amanda; Howel, in his pastoral function, appeared to him an excellent person to do so, and he requested him to follow her to Edwin's cottage. Howel readily complied: Amanda, and above all her employment, had interested his sensibility and excited his curiosity.

Amanda rose as he entered the cottage: but he declared if he disturbed her, he would instantly depart; she accordingly reseated herself, thinking she might, from some word or look of the curate, discover if he really were the person who had serenaded her. The whole family, nurse excepted, had followed Ellen to the dance, and she thought she could do no less, for the honour of Howel's visit, than prepare a comfortable little supper for him; his amiability had rendered him a general favourite. Amanda was soon

pleased with the elegance and simplicity of his manners. The objects about them led them to rural subjects, and from them to a dissertation on poetry. The voice of Amanda raised a kind of tender enthusiasm in Howel's soul; at his particular request, she recited the pathetic description of the curate and his lovely daughter, from the deserted village: a tear stole down her cheek as she proceeded. Howel softly laid his hand on hers, and exclaimed, "What an angel!"

"Come," said Amanda, smiling, "you at least should have nothing to do with flattery."

"Believe me," he replied, "flattery is a meanness I abhor; but to flatter you would be impossible."

In vain did nurse press Howel to partake of her duck and green peas, his eyes were too well feasted to allow him to attend to his palate. She therefore begged him to sing a favourite old ballad; at first he hesitated, till Amanda (from a motive of her own) joined in the entreaty; his first accents convinced her he was not the serenader. After this she could not refuse him one song; he seemed fascinated to the spot, till the nurse hinted about Amanda sitting up too late.

He sighed on entering his abode, at his narrow fortune. "Yet," cried he, "in this place, low and humble as it is, a soul like Amanda's might enjoy felicity."

Lord Mortimer had engaged Howel to sup with him; he felt displeased at his non-arrival: and at last unable to wait any longer, he proceeded to the parsonage, which he entered a few minutes after Howel. He asked why he did not fulfil his engagement. Absorbed in one idea, Howel was unable to frame any excuse, he therefore simply said, what in reality was true, "that he had utterly forgot it."

"I suppose then," said Mortimer, "you have been agreeably entertained." "Delightfully," said Howel.

"And pray what do you know about Miss Dunford?" cried Mortimer, after a pause. "About her?" repeated Howel, as if starting from a reverie, "why—nothing except that she is an angel."

Lord Mortimer now saw it was all over with the poor parson; and therefore resolved to lose no time himself. He could not depart without inquiring how the evening was spent, and envied Howel the happy minutes he so eloquently described.

CHAPTER VI.

—————Hither turn

Thy graceful footsteps; hither, gentle maid,
Incline thy polish'd forehead. Let thy eyes
Effuse the mildness of their azure dawn.

THE next morning Betsey brought Amanda a letter, and expecting to hear from her father, she eagerly opened it, what was her surprise on reading these lines!

To Miss Dunford.

Lord Mortimer begs leave to assure Miss Dunford he shall remain dissatisfied with himself till he has an opportunity of personally apologizing for his intrusion yesterday; and never shall he think himself entirely forgiven, if her visits to the library are discontinued.

July 17.

“From Lord Mortimer!” said Amanda, “well, this really has astonished me.” She called Betsey; “Tell the servant,” said she——

“Lort!” cried the nurse softly, “write his Lordship a little pit of a note, just to let him see what a pretty scribe you are.”

Amanda could not help smiling: but going to the servant, she desired him to tell his lord, that she thanked him for his polite attention: but that in future it would not be in her power to go to the library. An hour after, two servants came from Tudor Hall to the cottage with a small book case, which they sent into Amanda, and their lord's compliments that in a few minutes he would have the honour of paying his respects to her.

Amanda felt agitated by this message : but it was an agitation of involuntary delight ; and when she saw Lord Mortimer approaching, she snatched up a book, to avoid the appearance of sitting in expectation of his coming.

He entered with an air at once easy and respectful, and taking her hand, besought her forgiveness for his intrusion the preceding day. Amanda blushed and faltered out something about the confusion she had experienced from being so surprised, and thanked him for the books he had sent her ; but declared she must be excused from going to the library.

“ Good Heavens ! ” cried Lord Mortimer, “ how has your idea dwelt upon my mind since last night : if in the morning I were charmed, in the evening I was enraptured, I felt

‘ Awe struck, and as I passed, I worshipped. ’ ”

Confused at the energy of his words, Amanda turned over the leaves of the book she still held in her hand : and in doing so, she saw written in the title page, the Earl of Cherbury, — “ Cherbury ? ” repeated she, in astonishment.

“ Do you know him ? ” asked Lord Mortimer.

“ Not personally, but I revere, I esteem him : he is one of the best, the truest friends, my father ever had. ” “ Oh how happy ! ” exclaimed Lord Mortimer, “ would his son be, were he capable of inspiring you with such sentiments as you avow for him. ” “ His son ? ” repeated Amanda, in a tone of surprise.

“ Yes, ” replied he, “ and, oh, suffer ! ” he continued, “ the friendship which our parents feel, to be continued in their children—let this, ” taking her soft hand and pressing it to his lips, “ be the pledge of amity between us. ” He now inquired when the intimacy between her father and his had commenced, and where the former was. But from these inquiries Amanda shrunk. She repented having ever dropped a hint on the subject, which surprise alone had made

her do : and tried to wave the subject. In this design Lord Mortimer assisted her ; for he instantly perceived it confused and distressed her. He requested permission to renew his visits : but Amanda, though well inclined to grant his request, yielded to prudence instead of inclination : the seeming disparity (she could not help saying) in their situations would render it imprudent in her to receive such visits. Lord Mortimer continued to entreat, but she was steady in refusing him : he would not depart, however, till he had obtained permission to attend her in the evening to a part of Tudor Grove which she had never yet seen. He wanted to call for her, but this she would not permit.

With a beating heart she kept her appointment, and found his lordship not many yards distant from the cottage. A brighter bloom than usual glowed upon her cheek, as she listened to his ardent expressions of admiration ; yet not to such expressions as would soon have sated an ear of delicacy like Amanda's, did Lord Mortimer confine himself ; and never had Amanda experienced such minutes as she now passed with him : so delightful in their progress, so rapid in their course. On entering the walk he had mentioned to her, she saw he had not exaggerated its beauties ; after passing through many long and shady alleys, they came to a smooth green lawn, which sloped down to a winding stream : from the opposite side arose a stupendous mountain, diversified with hill and dale, and skirted with a wild shrubbery. Lord Mortimer prevailed on Amanda to sit down upon a rustic bench : here they had not sat long, ere the silence, which reigned around, was suddenly interrupted by strains, at once, low, solemn, and melodious. Amanda turned her eyes to Lord Mortimer, which seemed to say, it was to his magic it was owing. After enjoying her surprise, he acknowledged the music proceeded from two servants of his, who played on the clarinet and French-horn, and were stationed in

a dell of the opposite mountain. Amanda now conceived a stronger opinion that Lord Mortimer was the person who had serenaded her: she had reason soon to find she was not mistaken. Lord Mortimer solicited her for the Lady's song in Comus: on her hesitation, he told her she had no plea to offer for not complying, as he himself had heard her enchanting powers in it. Amanda started, and eagerly inquired when, or by what means. It was too late for his lordship to recede: and he not only confessed his concealment in the music-room, but his visit to her window.

At last she allowed him to lead her to a little rustic bridge thrown over the stream. Her plaintive and harmonious invocation, answered by the low breathing of the clarinet, took the imprisoned soul and wrapt it in Elysium.

Lord Mortimer now conducted her back to the seat, where, to her astonishment, she beheld fruits, ices, and creams, laid out, as if by the hand of magic. Dusky twilight now warned her to return home; but Mortimer first insisted on her partaking of this collation.

When they came near the cottage, he again entreated permission to visit her sometimes in the morning. Amanda's refusals grew fainter and fainter, and at last she said he might sometimes come. From this time few hours passed without their seeing each other.

The cold reserve of Amanda by degrees wore away; her heart felt that Lord Mortimer was one of the most amiable, most pleasing of men; she could scarcely disguise, in any degree, the lively pleasure she experienced in his society; nay, she scarcely thought it necessary to disguise it, for it resulted as much from innocence as sensibility, and was placed to the account of friendship. But Lord Mortimer soon discovered he might ascribe it to a softer impulse, and, that he had secured an interest in her heart, ere she

was aware, which the effects of subsequent resolution could not overcome. He was the companion of her rambles, the alleviator of her griefs, and the cares which so often saddened her brow, vanished at his presence.

Tudor grove was the favourite scene of their rambles; sometimes she allowed him to lead her to the music-room, but as these visits were not frequent, a lute was brought to the cottage, and she often played and sang to Mortimer, there too, he frequently read for her some elegant and pathetic piece of poetry, in a voice whose harmony sunk deep into her heart.

Seated sometimes on the brow of a shrubby hill, as they viewed the hamlets beneath, he would expatiate on the pleasure he conceived there must be in passing a tranquil life with one lovely and beloved object: his insidious eyes turned towards Amanda, at these minutes seemed to say, she was the being who could realize all the ideas he entertained of such a life: and when he asked her opinion of his sentiments, her disordered blushes, and faltering accents too plainly betrayed her conscious feelings. Every delicacy which Tudor Hall possessed was daily sent to the cottage, notwithstanding Amanda's prohibition to the contrary, and sometimes Lord Mortimer was permitted to dine with her in the recess. Three weeks spent in this familiar manner, endeared and attached them to each other more than three months would have done, passed in situations liable to interruptions.

CHAPTER VII.

—————She alone,

Heard, felt, and seen, possesses every thought,

Fills every sense, and pants in every vein.

Books are but formal dulness, tedious friends,

And sad amid the social band he sits,

Lonely and inattentive.

Thompson.

HOWEL was no stranger to the manner in which hours

rolled away at the cottage; he hovered round it, and seized every interval of Lord Mortimer's absence, to present himself before Amanda; his emotions betrayed his feelings, and Amanda effected reserve towards him, in hopes of suppressing his passion, a passion, she now began to think, when hopeless, must be dreadful.

Howel was a prey to melancholy; but not for himself alone did he mourn: fears for the safety and happiness of Amanda added to his dejection; he dreaded that Lord Mortimer, perhaps, like too many of the fashionable men, might make no scruple of availing himself of any advantage from a predilection in his favour.

He knew him to be amiable; but in opposition, he knew him to be volatile, and sometimes wild, and trembled for the unsuspecting credulity of Amanda—"Though lost to me," exclaimed the unhappy young man, "Oh never, sweetest Amanda, mayest thou be lost to thyself!"

He had received many proofs of esteem and friendship from Lord Mortimer; and therefore studied how to admonish without offending, and save Amanda without injuring himself. It at last occurred to him that the pulpit would be the surest way of effecting his wishes, where the subject addressed to all, might particularly strike the one for whom it was intended.

On the following Sunday, as he expected, Lord Mortimer and Amanda attended service.

The youthful monitor ascended the pulpit: his text was from Jeremiah.

"She weepeth sore in the night, and her tears are on her cheeks: among all her lovers she hath none to comfort her: all her friends have dealt treachrously with her, they are become her enemies."

As Howel proceeded, the fulness of his heart mounted to his eyes, which involuntarily turned and rested upon Amanda; interested by his simple and pathetic eloquence, she had risen, Lord Mortimer had

also risen; he at last saw tears trickling down Amanda's cheeks; the distresses of her own situation, and the stratagems of Belgrave, made her, in some respect, perceive a resemblance between herself and the picture Howel had drawn. Lord Mortimer was affected by it to tears, and he hid his face in his handkerchief. He waited for Howel's coming out of church.—“What the devil, Howel,” said he, “did you mean by giving us such an exhortation?” the parson coloured, but remained silent.

On his first acquaintance with Amanda, he had been tempted to think she was involved in mystery; and what, but impropriety, he thought, could occasion mystery? In consequence of this idea, he could not think himself very culpable in encouraging the wishes her loveliness gave rise to; besides, he had some reason to suspect she desired to inspire him with these wishes, for Mrs. Abergwilly told him she had informed Mrs. Edwin of his arrival; an information he could have no doubt her having immediately communicated to Amanda, therefore her continuing to come to the Hall seemed as if she wished to throw herself in his way.

He had never heard the Earl mention the name of Dunford; and suspected little credit was to be given to her assertion of intimacy between them, particularly as she always shrunk from the subject.

With such ideas, such sentiments, had Lord Mortimer's visits commenced; but they experienced an immediate change as the decreasing reserve of her manners gave him greater and more frequent opportunities of discovering her mental perfections. Esteem was now united to love, and real respect to admiration. It might be said he was entranced in pleasure, from which Howel completely roused him, and made him ask his heart, what were his intentions towards Amanda.

Ere he came to any determination, he resolved to try and discover her real situation. He accordingly

wrote to his sister, Lady Arminta Dormer, then with her father, to request her to ask him if he knew a person of the name of Dunford; and if he did, what was his situation and family. At the expected time he received an answer to his letter; but how was he shocked and alarmed, when informed, Lord Cherbury never knew a person of the name of Dunford! His doubts began to revive; but before he yielded entirely to them, he resolved to go to Amanda, and inquire from her, in the most explicit terms, how and at what time, her father and the Earl had become acquainted. Just as he was quitting the grove with this intent, he espied Edwin and his wife coming from the village; it instantly occurred to him, that these people, in the simplicity of their hearts, might reveal the real situation of Amanda.

Instead, therefore, of proceeding, he stopt till they came up to him, and then addressed them; insisting, as they appeared tired, they should repair to the Hall, and rest themselves. Lord Mortimer hastened forwards, to order refreshments into a parlour for them. When they arrived he was waiting for them; with difficulty he made them sit down at the table, where meat and wine was laid out for them: Lord Mortimer asked Edwin some questions about his farm and children. Still he had not touched upon the subject nearest his heart: he felt embarrassed and agitated: at last with as much composure as he could assume, he asked, how long they imagined Miss Dunford would stay with them. Now was the nurse's time to speak: she had hitherto sat simpering and bowing. "That depended upon circumstances," she said. "Poor tear young lady."—"Her father must miss her society very much," exclaimed Lord Mortimer.—"Tear heart, to be sure he does," cried nurse, "well, strange things happen every day; but still I never thought what did happen would have happened, to make the poor old gentleman and his daughter part." "What happened?" exclaimed Lord Mortimer, start-

ing and suddenly stopping in the middle of the room. "I was not her business," the nurse replied, "to be speaking about the affairs of her petters: put she could not help saying, because she thought it a pity his Lordship should remain in ignorance, that Miss Dunford was not what she appeared to be: no, if the truth were told, not the person she passed for at all, but poor tear thing," continued the nurse, "she is very unwilling to have her situation known, though she is not the first person who has met with a pad man: and shame and sorrow be upon him."

Lord Mortimer had heard enough: every doubt, every suspicion was now realized. It was plain Amanda was unworthy of his esteem: he was inspired with indignation at the idea of the snare he imagined she had spread for him. Full of this idea, he resolved, without longer delay, to visit his friend: but he afterwards thought that his continuing in the neighbourhood a little longer, without noticing her, might convince her, she was not quite so fascinating as she believed herself to be. When his residence at Tudor Hall was known, he had received numerous invitations, which (on Amanda's account) he uniformly declined: this he resolved should no longer be the case; some of these he accepted, but he grew restless; and his unhappiness increased: and he at last felt if he desired to experience any comfort, he must no longer absent himself from Amanda: and also that, if she refused to accede to the only proposals now in his power to make her, he would be miserable. At the time he finally determined to see her again, he was in a large party at a Welch baronet's: and on the rack of impatience, he retired early, and took the road to the cottage.

Poor Amanda, during this time, was a prey to disquietude: the first day of Lord Mortimer's absence, she thought business had detained him. The next morning she remained at home, expecting him every moment: but this expectation was destroyed, when

she heard one of the nurse's sons tell of all the company he had met going to Sir Lewis ap Shenkin's, and among the rest Lord Mortimer, whose servant told him, the day before, their lord dined at Mr Jones's where there was a grand ball in the evening. Amanda's heart almost died within her at these words, pleasure then, not business, had detained him from her: and she now condemned herself for ever having permitted his visits. In spite of wounded pride, tears of sorrow and disappointment burst from her. In the evening she walked out: and in the dejection of her heart, took the very road which led to the house where Mortimer had dined. With slow and pensive steps she pursued her way, till an approaching footstep made her raise her eyes, and she beheld, with equal surprise and confusion, the very object of her thoughts. Obeying the impulse of pride, she turned away; till recollecting, that her precipitately doing so would at once betray her sentiments, she paused to listen to his passionate inquiries after her health; having answered them with involuntary coldness. She again moved on: but Lord Mortimer, snatching her hand, insisted on knowing why she avoided him. Amanda made no reply, but made violent efforts to disengage her hand, but Lord Mortimer held it too firmly, and without hinting at his absence, in such a way as to hurt her feelings, he apologized for it, saying he had received a letter which so ruffled his mind, he was quite unfit for her society, and had therefore availed himself of these hours of chagrin to accept some invitations to avoid giving offence, and had thus reserved the precious moments of returning tranquillity for her he adored. Amanda felt a weight removed from her heart: and she now suffered Lord Mortimer to lead her to the favourite haunt in Tudor-Grove.

While they pursued their way, the sky suddenly became darkened, and foretold an approaching storm. Lord Mortimer did not oppose Amanda's returning home; but scarcely had they turned for that purpose

ere the lightning flashed and the thunder rolled. The Hall was nearer than the cottage, and Lord Mortimer hurried Amanda to it: but ere they reached it, the rain poured down with violence. Lord Mortimer snatched off her hat and cloak, the rest of her clothes were quite dry. As she presided at the tea-table, his eyes, with the fondest rapture, were fastened on her face. He could not restrain the feelings of his soul.—“Oh what happiness!” he exclaimed, ---“No wonder I found all society tasteless, after having experienced yours. Where could I find such softness, yet such sensibility, such sweetness, yet such animation? Oh my Amanda, smoothly must that life glide on, whose destiny you shall share.”

Amanda endeavoured to check these transports, yet secretly they filled her with delight. Present happiness, however, could not render her forgetful of propriety; and after she had gratified him with a song, she insisted on getting her hat and cloak, which had been sent to Mrs. Abergwilly to dry, Lord Mortimer at last went out to obey her.

Amanda walked to the window; all nature appeared revived and animated.—“Oh! how sweet, how lovely is the dewy landscape,” exclaimed Amanda. “’Tis lovely indeed;” repeated Lord Mortimer, who returned at this moment, assuring her the things would be sent in directly.—“Were you absent,” said he, “it would lose its beauty and become tasteless to me. But tell me why this hurry, why this wish to leave me? Do you expect to meet with a heart more firmly attached to you than mine? Oh, my Amanda, if you do, how are you mistaken. And why,” continued he, “should we create uneasiness to ourselves by again separating?”

Amanda looked up at these words with involuntary surprise. Lord Mortimer understood it: he saw she had deluded herself with thinking his intentions towards her very different from what they really were. Straining her to his heart, he imprinted a kiss upon her

tremulous lips. Trembling while she struggled to free herself from his arms, Amanda demanded what he meant; her manner somewhat surprised and confused him; when he, though with half averted eyes, declared his hopes, his wishes and intentions. Surprise—horror—and indignation, for a few minutes overpowered her; but suddenly she burst from him, and rushed to the door; Lord Mortimer caught hold of her. “Whither are you going Amanda?” exclaimed he, affrighted by her manner.

“From the basest of men;” cried she.

He shut the door and forced her back to a chair; he was shocked—amazed—and confounded by her looks. “Oh, my love,” he exclaimed, laying his hand upon her trembling one, “what do you mean by departing so abruptly?”

“My meaning, my Lord,” cried she rising and shaking his hand from her, “is now as obvious as yours—I seek for ever to quit a man who meditated so base a scheme against me. Oh, heavens,” she continued, clasping her hands together in a sudden agony of tears, “is it me, the helpless child of sorrow, Lord Mortimer sought as a victim to illicit love! Is it the son of Lord Cherbury, destined such a blow against the unfortunate Fitzalan!”

Lord Mortimer started, “Fitzalan!” repeated he, —“Oh! Amanda, why did you conceal your name? and what am I to infer from your having done so?”

“What you please, my Lord,” cried she, “the opinion of a person I despise, can be of little consequence to me: yet,” she continued, “that you may have no plea for your conduct, know, that my name was concealed by the desire of my father, who, involved in unexpected distresses, wished me to adopt another, till his affairs were settled.”

As she ended these words, she moved towards the door. Lord Mortimer no longer attempted to hinder her; he however followed her from it.—“What do you mean by following me, my Lord?” asked she.

"I mean to see you safely home," replied he.

"And is it Lord Mortimer," cried she, "pretends to see me safe?"

She now quickened her pace; within a few yards of the cottage Lord Mortimer caught her with a distracted air. "Amanda," said he, "I cannot bear to part with you in this manner: you think me the vilest villain on earth."

"Most assuredly, my Lord," replied she.

"Cannot compunction extenuate my error?"

"'Tis not compunction, 'tis regret you feel, for finding your designs unsuccessful."

"No; by all that is sacred, 'tis remorse for ever having meditated such an injury. Oh! dearest Amanda," (kneeling before her) "let me beseech of you not to drive me from you in the hour of penitence."

"You plead in vain, my Lord," cried she breaking from him.

He started from the ground, and again seized her: he was pale and trembling: and a tear wet his cheek. Amanda's began to flow, she averted her head, to hide her emotion; but he perceived it.

"You weep, my Amanda," said he, "you feel pity!"

"No, no," cried she, in a voice scarcely articulate: "ah! my Lord, timely profit by mental correction, nor ever again encourage a passion which virtue cannot sanction, nor reason justify."

Amanda darted from Lord Mortimer; and hastily entered the cottage. Her looks terrified the nurse, she had no hat or cloak on, and her face was pale as death.—"Lack a tay," said she, "what ails my sweet child?"

Relieved by tears, Amanda told her nurse she was not very well, and that she had been reflecting on the great impropriety there was in receiving Lord Mortimer's visits, whom she begged her nurse (if he came again) not to admit.

The nurse shook her head, and supposed there had

been some quarrel between them. Amanda charged her never to address him on such a subject, and having made her promise not to admit him, she retired to her chamber faint and weary.

“Alas! my father,” she cried, “is this the secure retreat you fondly thought you had discovered for me; am I doomed to be the victim of deception—and, except thy honest tender heart, my father, find every other fraught with deceit and treachery to me? Belgrave aimed at my peace—but Mortimer alone had power to pierce ‘the vital vulnerable heart.’”

Lord Mortimer was now a prey to all the pangs which an ingenious mind, oppressed with a consciousness of error, must ever feel. When he reflected on the uniform appearance of innocence Amanda had always worn, he wondered at his weakness, in ever having doubted its reality—at his audacity at ever having insulted it, when he reflected on her melancholy, he shuddered as if having increased it.

A ray of hope darted into his mind, at the idea of prevailing on her to listen to the circumstances which had led him into a conduct so unworthy of her and himself; such an explanation, he trusted, would regain her love and confidence, and make her accept, what he meant immediately to offer—his hand. He went up to the cottage and laid his hand upon the latch; he hesitated; even from the rustics he wished to conceal his shame and confusion. All within and without the cottage was still.

“Happy rustics!” exclaimed Lord Mortimer, “children of content and undeviating integrity, sleep presses sweetly on your eye-lids. My Amanda too, rests, for she is innocent.”

He descended to the valley, and saw a light from her window; he advanced within a few yards of it, and saw her plainly walk with an agitated air—her handkerchief raised to her eyes, as if she wept. His feelings rose almost to frenzy at this sight, and he execrated himself for being the occasion of her tears.

The village clock struck one: good heavens how many hours must intervene, ere he could kneel before the lovely mourner. The light was at last extinguished: but he could not rest, and continued to wander about, like a perturbed spirit, till the day began to dawn, and he saw some early peasants coming to their labours.

CHAPTER VIII.

Oh let me now into a richer soil,
 Transplant thee safe, where vernal suns and flowers
 Diffuse their warmest, largest influence ;
 And of my garden be the prime and joy. *Thompson.*

THE moment he thought he could see Amanda, Lord Mortimer hastened to the cottage; but was told she was too ill to see company. In the evening he made another attempt; "Tell him," said Amanda, "I am astonished at his request, and will never grant it, let him seek elsewhere a heart more like his own, and trouble my repose no more."

He heard her words, and flew out of the house. Howel entered soon after, and heard from Ellen an account of the quarrel: hope sprung into his heart, and he desired Ellen to meet him in half an hour.

As the parson had never paid Miss Fitzalan any of those attentions which strike a vulgar eye. Ellen took it into her head he was an admirer of hers. Whilst adorning herself for the appointment, the faithful Chip entered to escort her to a little dance. Ellen bridled up at the first intimation of it: and delighted with Amanda's message to Lord Mortimer, she now resolved to intimate it.

"Well, well, Nell," said he, half crying, "the time may come, when you will repent serving a true-hearted lad thus," so saying he ran from the house.

Ellen surveyed herself with great admiration, and expected nothing less than an immediate offer of the parson's hand. She found him punctual. "Ellen,"

said he, taking her hand, "do you think there is any hope for me? but, perhaps the quarrel may be made up?"

"No, I assure you," replied she, "it was entirely on your account it ever took place."

"Is it possible," exclaimed he, "do you think she is too ill to see me now?"

"Who too ill?"

"Why Miss Fitzalan."

"Miss Fitzalan!" repeated she, changing colour. Adieu to Ellen's airy hopes: her chagrin could not be concealed: and tears burst from her. The curate tenderly inquired the cause of her emotion: though vain, she was not artful, and could not disguise it.

As she returned home she met a little boy, who gave her a letter from Chip: full of the idea that it contained some overtures for a reconciliation, she hastily opened it, and read the following:

"Ellen after your cruelty I could not bear to stay in the village; so before this comes to hand, I shall be on my way to enter one of the King's ships; heaven knows if we shall ever meet again. Tim Chip."

Thus did Ellen's vanity receive a speedy punishment. Her distress for some days was unabated.

Lord Mortimer, in despair at finding all his letters and messages rejected by Amanda, at last by stratagem effected an interview. Having met one of the young Edwin's with a letter for Amanda, he prevailed upon the young man to relinquish it, and flew to the cottage. "Now," cried he, "the inexorable girl must appear, if she wants her letter."

Lord Mortimer would not give the letter into other hands than Amanda's, and that only on conditions she would read it in his presence.

The pity and compunction of his Lordship increased as he gazed on her pale face, while her eyes ran over the following letter.

“To Miss Fitzalan.

“Dry up your tears, child of early sorrow, for the source of grief exists no longer: Lord Cherbury has been kind beyond my utmost expectation. In my next I shall be more explicit. The faithful Edwins will rejoice at the renewed fortune of their dear Amanda’s affectionate father.

Jermyn Street.

Tus. Fitzalan,”

The letter dropt from her hand, and her streaming eyes were raised to heaven. “Oh, gracious heaven,” she exclaimed, “bless the benefactor of my father for this deed!”

“And who, may I ask,” said Lord Mortimer, “merits so sweet a prayer from Amanda?”

“See,” cried she, as if happy to have such a proof of the truth of what she had alleged to him.

Lord Mortimer was affected by the letter; and his eyes filled with tears: he again approached her. “And while you so sweetly pray for the felicity of the father,” said he, “are you resolved to doom the son to despair?”

Amanda rose, as if with the intention of retiring, but Lord Mortimer caught her hand. He would not permit her to depart till she had heard his vindication of his conduct. And oh! how fervent was the rapture of her heart, when, as she listened to him, she found that he was still the amiable, the generous, the noble character her fancy had first conceived him to be, and when he requested permission to appeal to her father, she could no longer doubt the sincerity of his intentions.

When his transports were a little abated, he insisted on writing immediately to Fitzalan: and as he sealed the letter he told Amanda he had requested an expeditious answer. The happiness of the youthful pair was communicated to the honest rustics, whom Lord Mortimer liberally rewarded for their fidelity to his Amanda, and whom she readily ex-

cused for their ambiguous expressions to him, knowing they proceeded from simplicity of heart, and a wish of serving her.

The day after the reconciliation, Lord Mortimer told Amanda he was compelled, for a short time, to leave her: the visit which he had come into Wales for the purpose of paying, had been so long deferred, his friend was growing impatient, and threatened to come to Tudor-Hall to see what detained him there. To prevent such a measure, which he knew would totally interrupt the happiness he enjoyed in her society, Lord Mortimer added, he meant to pass a few days with him, hoping by the time he returned there would be a letter from Mr. Fitzalan, which would authorize his immediate preparations for their nuptials. Amanda wished, but could not totally hide the uneasiness she felt at the prospect of a separation: the idea, however of his speedy return, rendered it but transient, and he departed in a few hours after he had mentioned his intention.

CHAPTER IX.

Alas! the story melts away my soul,
That best of fathers, how shall I discharge
The gratitude and duty which I owe thee?
—By laying up his counsels in your heart. *Cato.*

THE fourth evening of Mortimer's absence, a chaise stopped at the door of the cottage, from which, to Amanda's amazement, her father descended.

"I am come, Amanda," said he, "to take you away with me, and one hour is all I can give you to prepare yourself." "Good heavens!" exclaimed Amanda, "to take me away immediately!" "Immediately," he repeated. "And I shall be happy if this good girl," turning to Ellen, "will accompany you."

Ellen and her parents gladly consented: having pined ever since her lover's departure, she rejoiced at the idea of a change of scene.

Not so Amanda : it made her suffer agony. Her father, perhaps, had not received Mortimer's letter ; it was but justice, then to him and Mortimer to reveal her situation : but as she stood before him for that purpose, at a loss to begin, he softly exclaimed, " My love, let us for the present wave every subject." She turned in silence : tears ran down her cheeks, and for the first time she thought she was hurried away to avoid Lord Mortimer : but why, she could not think. When she took a pen to inform him the cause of her flight, she could not write : and her father watched her so closely that she had not another opportunity, nor so much as a chance to deliver a message to the nurse for Lord Mortimer, Fitzalan would not inform the Edwins as to where he was going, saying they should know hereafter. Amanda was handed to the carriage—silence prevailed—all the travellers were equally, though differently, affected. Ellen sighed on passing the forsaken cottage of poor Chip. Fitzalan was the first to break the silence : a cross road from the cottage shortly brought them to Conwayferry, which they were obliged to pass. They only continued at Conway till a carriage was ready and then stopped not again till they reached Bangorferry, where they were to rest for the night, her father left her and Ellen together, while he went to give directions about the journey of the next day.

Amanda went to the window and threw up the sash : a bright moon cast her radiance on the water : in a few minutes she saw a party of gentlemen coming from a boat to the inn : the light was too dim to allow their faces to be seen, but in the figure of one Amanda thought she perceived a strong resemblance to Lord Mortimer, and at the same moment heard him order his horse to be ready at twelve o'clock, as he would take advantage of such fine weather to return to Tudor-Hall. Oh, what were now the agitations of Amanda, to think that in one moment she could inform Mortimer of her situation : but the

transport the idea gave was relinquished as soon as felt, as such a measure, she thought, might perhaps for ever disoblige her father; in this tumult of doubt he found her; and by his conduct evinced that he not only knew of Lord Mortimer's being in the house, but wished her to avoid him. The supper he had ordered was a little retarded by the late dinner of his gay neighbours; vainly did his timid companions try to eat, and the most unsocial silence prevailed.

Unbounded gaiety reigned in the next apartment, from which every sound could plainly be distinguished.—Dinner over, bumper toasts were called. Lord Mortimer at last was asked for a fair nymph. "I will give you," exclaimed he, "an angel!" "A name for this celestial beauty!" demanded one of the party. "Amanda," cried his lordship.—"Oh that won't do;" said another, "this angel shall not pass without the rest of her name." "Miss Fitzalan, then," exclaimed his lordship. "Oh! oh!" cried a new voice, after due honour had been paid to the toast, "I begin to unravel a mystery; this Amanda, I suppose, is the rosy daughter of some poor curate in the vicinity of Tudor-Hall, who, for—" "Beware" interrupted Mortimer, in an agitated voice, "of what you say, give me no reason to repent having introduced a name so valued into this company." The face of Fitzalan was crimsoned over, and he again darted a frown at Amanda: and at once conducted her himself to her room, which was directly over that where the gentlemen sat. To think of rest was impossible. Ellen essayed artless consolation. Amanda motioned her to silence, unwilling to lose the smallest sound of Mortimer's voice. At length the horses were led from the stable. Amanda softly raised the window, and saw Lord Mortimer gallop off; when she could no longer hear the clattering of the horses' hoofs, her heart sunk within her, and she wept; she no longer opposed Ellen's efforts to undress her, exhausted by fatigue, sleep soon closed her eyes, and fancy again took her to Tudor Hall and Mortimer.

By the first dawn of day her father roused her, and she and Ellen were ready to attend him in a few minutes: a boat was already prepared, and on gaining the opposite side they found a carriage in waiting. They stopped not till they reached Gwinty, and then proceeded to Holyhead, which place Fitzalan announced as they entered it; and now Amanda first conceived the idea of being brought to another kingdom, in which her father soon confirmed her; for he inquired when a packet would sail, and heard with evident pleasure, about six in the afternoon; he desired three passages to be engaged: and having dismissed Ellen into another room, seating himself by Amanda, he took her hand, and thus addressed her;—"To give pain to your gentle heart has inflicted torture on mine; but honour compelled me to the conduct I have adopted, and which, I trust, Amanda will excuse when she hears my motives for it.

"On Lord Cherbury's arrival in town, I was immediately informed: and scarcely had he read my letter, ere, with all the ardour of real friendship, he came and brought me to his house; his lordship soon formed a plan, that at once filled me with gratitude and pleasure, this was for me to accept of the agency of a considerable estate in the north of Ireland, and proposed my residing in the mansion-house, offering to advance a sum sufficient for all exigencies. I accepted his generous offer, and soon freed myself from the power of Belgrave. I now felt a tranquillity I was long a stranger to, when Lord Mortimer's letter broke the calm I enjoyed. Gracious heaven! I shuddered to think, that at the very period Lord Cherbury was building up my fortune, the hopes he entertained for this darling son were in a way of being destroyed, through means of a connection of mine; he had hinted to me of his having already settled upon a splendid alliance for Lord Mortimer, this the infatuated young man had himself some knowledge of, for in his rash letter he entreated my

secrecy till beyond the power of mortals to separate you. I committed the letter to the flames, and travelled post, resolved to separate you and him---even if prepared for the altar. Your attachment, when repelled by reason and fortitude, will soon vanish. As for Lord Mortimer, removed from the flame which warmed his heart, he will soon forget it ever played around it---should he, however, be daring enough to persevere, he will find my resolution unalterable." Amanda's emotions deprived her of speech or action, she sat as pale as a statue, listening to her father's firm and rapid language. Ignorant of her inability to speak, he felt hurt, and rising abruptly, "I see---I see,"—cried he at last, "I am destined to be unhappy." "Oh! my father!" exclaimed Amanda, starting up and flinging herself into his arms, "dearest, best of fathers, what is all the world to me in comparison of you? shall I put Lord Mortimer, so lately a stranger, into competition with your happiness?—Oh no! I will henceforth try to regulate every impulse of my heart according to your wishes." Fitzalan burst into tears---the enthusiasm of virtue warmed them both.

Dinner was brought in, to which they sat down in their usual social manner, and Amanda, happy in her father's smiles, felt a ray of returning cheerfulness. The evening was delightfully serene when they went on board. By the dawn of next morn the vessel entered the bay of Dublin; they breakfasted at the Marine Hotel, and then proceeded in a carriage to an hotel in Chapel-street, where they proposed staying a few days to enjoy Oscar's company, whose regiment was in Dublin. As the carriage drove down Chapel-street, Amanda saw a young officer, whose air very much resembled Oscar's, nor was she mistaken; the carriage passed too swiftly for him to recognise her face: but he was astonished to see a fair hand waving to him: he walked down the street, and reached the hotel just as they were entering it.

CHAPTER X.

And whence unhappy, he cried,
The sorrows of thy breast?

Goldsmith.

THE raptures of this meeting were heightened by surprise, Oscar was unfortunately that day on guard at the Bank: but the next morning, the moment he was relieved, he came to them; he attended Amanda to the most celebrated shops to make her purchases: and they returned about dinner time to their father.

We may now suppose Fitzalan in the possession of happiness, in the society of his children, and certainty of a competence: but, alas! his happiness experienced a corroding drawback in the alteration he witnessed in his son: Oscar was improved in person, but his eyes no longer beamed with animation and his cheerfulness appeared but constrained.

Fitzalan, with all the anxiety and tenderness of a parent, enquired after the source of his uneasiness, but Oscar started from the remotest hint of its cause, and pretended to say it was but a slight chagrin which would soon wear away of itself, if not renewed by inquiries. After regarding him a few minutes, Fitzalan suddenly exclaimed, "Alas! my dear boy, I fear things are worse within you than you will allow." "Now, Oscar," cried Amanda, smiling, anxious to relieve him from his embarrassment, "though never in the wars, I fancy you are not quite heart-whole." He answered her with affected gaiety; but as if wishing to change the discourse, suddenly spoke of Colonel Belgrave, who, at present, he said, was absent from the regiment: occupied by his own feelings, he observed not the glow which mantled the cheeks of his father and sister at the name.

Fitzalan told his son of the friendship of Lord Cherbury, from which, he said, he trusted to have him shortly promoted. "Be assured, dear Oscar," he cried, "most willingly would I relinquish many

of the comforts of life to hasten your promotion or add to your happiness." "My happiness!" Oscar mournfully repeated; tears filled his eyes, and starting up, he hastened to a window. "Oscar, my dear Oscar," said Amanda, as she flung her arms round his neck. He sat down and leaning his head on her bosom, his tears fell through her handkerchief.

"Oh, heavens!" exclaimed Fitzalan, clasping his hands together, "what a sight is this."

Amanda's tears began to flow, and Oscar's were increased. "Excuse me," at last he said, making an effort to exert himself, "I am ashamed of my weakness, and will yield to it no more—forget therefore having seen it; and now let the short time we have to continue together, be devoted to cheerfulness.

Soon after this he mentioned Parker's performance on Marlborough Green, and proposed, as it was now the hour, taking Amanda there; the Green was extremely crowded, particularly with officers. Oscar was soon surrounded by them, and compelled to introduce them to Amanda. Their compliments soon made her forget the performance, and Ellen, who sat behind her, afforded innocent mirth by her remarks.

The next day was devoted to the public buildings, the Park, and other places. On the ensuing morn Fitzalan and Amanda continued their journey to the North, where Oscar hoped to join them the following summer. As he helped his sister in the carriage, she put a pocket-book into his hand (given by her father for that purpose) which contained something to replenish his purse.

While the travellers are journeying along, we shall endeavour to account for the dejection of Oscar.

CHAPTER XI.

From the loud camp retir'd and noisy court,
 In honourable ease, and rural sport;
 The remnant of his days he safely past,
 Nor found they lagg'd too slow, nor flew too fast
 One child he had - a daughter chaste and fair,
 His age's comfort, and his fortune's heir. *Prior.*

OSCAR's regiment, on his first joining it in Ireland, was quartered in Enniskillen: and he felt all the delight of a young and enterprising mind; many of his idle mornings were spent in rambling about the country, sometimes accompanied by a party of officers, and sometimes alone.

In one of his solitary excursions, along the banks of Lough Erne, with a light fusée on his shoulder, after proceeding a few miles he felt quite exhausted by the heat, which was intense; at a little distance he perceived an orchard of growing apples, and resolved on trying if any were to be purchased, he accordingly ascended a path to a very plain white cottage, he knocked at the door, and immediately a little rosy girl appeared: "Tell me, my pretty lass," cried he, "whether I can purchase any of the fine apples I see here." Oscar at this moment saw a beautiful face peeping out from a half closed door; he started, and made a step into the passage, the room-door directly opened, and an elderly woman of a genteel figure, appeared, "Good heaven," cried Oscar, taking off his hat, and retreating, "I fear I have been guilty of the highest impertinence." "Your mistake, sir," she replied with a benevolent smile "is too trifling to require an apology."

She then politely showed him into the parlour, where he contemplated the fair being of whom before he had but a transient glance; she appeared to be scarcely seventeen, and was what a painter would have chosen to copy for a little playful Hebe;

though below even the middle size, she was formed with the nicest symmetry : and the easy manner in which she bore Oscar's looks, proclaimed her at once not unaccustomed to admiration nor displeased with what she now received.

A fine basket of apples, and some delicious cyder was brought to Oscar.

The beauty and elegance of the interior of the cottage did not correspond with its plain exterior.

Adela, so was the charming young creature called, running over the basket, and picking out the finest apples, presented them to Oscar. A cuckoo clock by striking three, reminded him he had passed near two hours in the cottage. "Oh, heavens!" cried he "I have made a most unconscionable intrusion!" and snatching up his hat, he departed.

The sound of footsteps after him on the lawn made him turn, and he perceived the ladies had followed him, "I presume," said Adela, handling his fusee, "you were trying your success to-day in fowling?" "Yes, but I have been unsuccessful." "Then I assure you," said she, with an arch smile, "there is choice game to be found in our woods." "Come, come," exclaimed the old lady, "we are detaining the gentleman." She took her fair companion by the arm and turned hastily to the cottage. Oscar, with a half smothered sigh, descended to the road.

The next morning the fusee was again taken down, and he sallied out. Upon his arrival at the orchard he advanced a few steps up the path, but no object was visible. Oscar was too modest to enter, uninvited, the cottage, he therefore turned back : he now went and sat down upon a moss-covered stone, on the margin of the lake, a short distance from the cottage : he was suddenly roused from his contemplation by the warble of a female voice : he turned and beheld Adela close by him.—"Bless me!" cried she, "who would have thought of seeing you here? why you look quite fatigued, and, I believe want ap-

ples to-day, as much as you did yesterday."—Then sitting down on the seat he had resigned, she tossed off her bonnet; Oscar snatching it from the ground, Adela flung apples into it, observing it would make an excellent basket. He sat at her feet, and never, perhaps, felt such a variety of emotions as at the present moment; Adela heard the half formed sentences of admiration, as they broke from his lips, with the most perfect composure, desiring him to eat or pocket his apples, as she wanted her bonnet to return to the cottage, from which she had made a stolen march. The apples were instantly pocketed, and he was permitted to tie on the bonnet. A depraved man might have misinterpreted Adela's gaiety.

"May I advance?" said Oscar, as he pushed open the gate for her. "If you do," replied she, "the least that will be said is, that we were in search of each other the whole morning."

As he returned from the cottage, he enquired of some labourers concerning its owner, and learned she was a widow-lady of the name of Marlowe.

On Oscar's return, he heard that General Honeywood, a veteran who had a fine estate about fourteen miles from the town, had that morning sent cards for a grand fête and ball, which he annually gave on the first of July, to commemorate one of the glorious victories of King William. The officers were much pleased, having long wished to see the General's daughter, who was much admired.

Oscar actuated by an impulse, which if he could, he did not strive to account for, continued to parade daily before the orchard, but without again seeing Adela.

At length the day for General Honeywood's entertainment arrived, and the officers, accompanied by a large party set off early for Woodlawn, the General's seat, it was situated on the borders of the lake: Larges were waiting to convey them to a small island, which was the scene of the morning's amuse-

ment; the breakfast was laid out amid the ruins of an ancient building; between whose ivy covered arches were placed seats and breakfast-table, ornamented in a fanciful manner.

The officers experienced a most agreeable surprise on entering; but what were Oscar's sensations when he beheld in Miss Honeywood the lovely Adela? she seemed to enjoy his surprise, and Mrs. Marlowe from the opposite side of the table, beckoned him to her, and made room for him by herself: "Well, my friend," cried she, "do you think you shall find the General's fruit as tempting as mine?"—"Ah!" exclaimed Oscar, half sighing, half smiling, "Hesperian fruit, I fear, which I can never hope to obtain." Adela's attention during breakfast was too much engrossed by the company to allow her to notice Oscar more than by a few hasty words and smiles. There being no dancing till the evening, they dispersed according to their inclinations.

Oscar followed the footsteps of Adela: but the very moment he saw her disengaged from a large party, the General hallooed to him from a shady bank on which he sat. Oscar could not refuse the summons; and the General extending his hand gave him a cordial squeeze, and welcomed him as the son of a brave man he had once intimately known. "I recollected the name of Fitzalan," said he, "the moment I heard it, and had the happiness of learning from Colonel Belgrave, I was not mistaken in believing you to be the son of my old friend."

The manner in which he enquired after his father was truly pleasing to Oscar. "He had once," he said, "saved his life at the imminent danger of his own, and it was an obligation, while that life remained, he could never forget."

Like Don Guzman in Gil Blas, the General delighted in fighting over his battles, and now proceeded to enumerate many incidents which happened in the American war, when he and Fitzalan served in the

same regiment. At length Adela's patience, like Oscar's, being exhausted, she ran forward, and told her father "he must not detain him another minute, for they were going upon the lake." The General called her a saucy baggage, kissed her with rapture, and saw her trip off with his young friend, who seized the favourable opportunity to engage her for the first set in the evening. About four the company assembled in the Abbey to dinner. At six the ladies returned to Woodlawn to dress for the ball, and by eleven the ball-room was completely crowded with company, at once brilliant and lively.

Adela, adorned in a style superior to what Oscar had yet seen her, appeared more lovely than he had even at first thought her. Oscar reminded her of the promise of the morning at the moment Colonel Belgrave advanced to engage her. She instantly informed him of her engagement to Mr. Fitzalan.—"Mr. Fitzalan," repeated the Colonel; "he has been rather precipitate, but who can wonder at his anxiety to engage Miss Honeywood?"

The dance having concluded, Adela complained of fatigue, and retired to an alcove, whither Oscar followed her. Adela in dancing had dropped her bandeau; Oscar took it up, and still retained it.—Adela now stretched out her hand to take it. "Allow me," cried he, "to keep it; let me have some memento of the charming hours I have passed to-day."—"Oh! a truce," said Adela, "with such expressions (who did not, however, oppose his putting her bandeau in his bosom) they are quite commonplace, and have been repeated to hundreds, and will again, I make no doubt." "Oh! would to heaven," exclaimed Oscar, "I durst convince you how mistaken you are."—Adela, laughing, assured him it would be a difficult matter. Oscar grew pensive, "I think," cried he, "if oppressed by misfortunes, I should like a seclusion in the old Abbey." "Why really," said Adela, "it is tolerably calculated for an

hermitage, and if you take a solitary whim I beg I may be informed of it in time, as I should receive peculiar pleasure in preparing your mossy couch and frugal fare."—"My reason for liking it," replied he, "would be the prospect I should have from it of Woodlawn." "And does Woodlawn," asked Adela, "contain such particular charms, as to render a view of it so delightful?"

At this moment they were summoned to a new dance. The Colonel engaged Adela; and though Oscar had no inclination to dance, to avoid particularity, he stood up with a young lady esteemed extremely handsome. Adela suddenly interrupted the Colonel in a gallant speech he was making her, to enquire "if he thought Miss O'Neal (Oscar's partner) so pretty as she was generally thought?" "Why," cried he, "the girl has charms, but so totally eclipsed (looking languishingly at Adela) in my eyes, that I cannot do them the justice they may perhaps merit; Fitzalan, however seems as if he would make up for the deficiency of every other person." Adela turned pale, and took the first opportunity of demanding her bandeau from Oscar, telling him to procure one from Miss O'Neal.—"No," cried he, "I would not pay her charms and my own sincerity so bad a compliment as to ask what I should not in the least value," Adela's spirits revived, and she repeated her request no more.

When the party dispersed, the General charged Oscar to consider Woodlawn as his head-quarters. "Be assured," said the good natured old man, "the son of my brave and long respected friend, will ever be welcomed to my heart and home."

From this period Oscar became almost an inmate of his house, and the general grew so attached to him, that he felt unhappy if deprived of his society. But his time was not so entirely engrossed by the General as to prevent his having many hours to devote to Adela; with her he conversed, read, and sung;

rambled through romantic paths, or rode along the beautiful borders of Lough Erne.

Adela from delighting in company, suddenly took a pensive turn, and seemed in a solitary ramble with Oscar, to enjoy more pleasure than the gayest party appeared to afford her, then sometimes would she sing a little simple air, and carelessly leaning on the arm of Oscar, appear to enjoy perfect felicity; not so poor Oscar, the feelings of his soul at these moments trembled on his lips, and to repress them was agony.

An incident soon occurred which endeared him yet more to the General; driving one day along a road cut over a mountain, the horses began to rear in the most frightful manner. Oscar saw that nothing but an effort of desperate resolution could keep them from destruction, he leaped out, and rushing before the horses, seized their heads at the imminent hazard of being tumbled down a precipice, on whose very verge he stood. This generous old man felt for Oscar the most unbounded love and gratitude, and he resolved to bestow on him his rich and lovely heiress, who had acknowledged to her father her predilection for him. He resolved on communicating his project to Belgrave, whom, on Oscar's account, he regarded, as Oscar had said (what indeed he believed) that he was partly indebted to him for his commission.

What a thunder-stroke was this to Belgrave, who arrived at Woodlawn the morning after the resolution was finally settled, and was asked to accompany the General about a little business, to the summer-house; poor Oscar trembled, he felt a presentiment he should be the subject of discourse, and had no doubt but the General meant to complain to Belgrave, as a person having some authority over him, about his great particularity to Miss Honeywood.

Rage, envy, and surprise, kept the Colonel silent some minutes after the general had done speaking. "You must break the affair to the young fellow,"

continued the General, "for I should be in such a flurry I should set all in confusion at the first onset."

The gloom and embarrassment which appeared in the countenance of the Colonel, filled Oscar with alarm; he imagined them excited by friendship for him; and longed to hear particulars, and for the first time to quit Woodlawn. The Colonel was indeed in a state of torture: he had long meditated the conquest of Adela, to resign her without one effort of circumventing Oscar was not to be thought of, to blast his promised joys, even if it did not lead to the accomplishment of his own wishes, he felt would give him some comfort.

They set off early the next morning for Enniskillen, and Belgrave sent his servant on before them, that there might be no restraint on the conversation he found Oscar inclined to begin.

CHAPTER XII

Sincerity!

Thou first of virtues, let no mortal leave
 Thy onward path, altho' the earth should gape,
 And from the gulph of hell destruction cry
 To take dissimulation's winding way. *Douglas.*

"WELL, Colonel," said Oscar, "I fancy I was not mistaken in thinking the General wanted to speak with you concerning me: I am convinced you will not conceal any particulars of a conversation it may be so essential to my honour to hear." "Why, faith" cried the Colonel, delighted to commence his operations, "he was making a kind of complaint about you, though he acknowledges you a brave lad, yet hang him, he has not generosity enough to reward that bravery with his daughter, or any of his treasure."

"Heaven is my witness," exclaimed Oscar, "I never aspired to either, I always knew my passion for his daughter as hopeless as fervent, I see, however, I must become an exile to Woodlawn." "Not so either,"

replied the Colonel, "only avoid such particularity to the girl, I believe in my soul, she has more pride than susceptibility in her nature; in your next visit, declare in a cavalier manner, your affections were engaged before you came to Ireland: this will set all right with the General: and you will be welcome as ever to Woodlawn." "No," said Oscar, "I cannot assert so great a falsehood."

"How ridiculous;" replied the Colonel, "for heaven's sake, my dear boy, drop such romantic notions, I should be the last man in the world to desire you to invent a falsehood to injure any one, but in honour you are bound to do as I desire you, for should the girl have been imprudent enough to conceive an attachment for you, this will certainly remove it." "My dear Colonel," said Oscar, his eyes suddenly sparkling, "do you think she has been imprudent enough to conceive partiality for me?" "I am sure," said the Colonel, "I cannot possibly answer that question: but, from her gay and unembarrassed manner, I should think she has not." "Why then," cried Oscar, "should I be guilty of a falsehood?" "I have told you my reasons," replied the Colonel, "do as you please." They were both now silent, but the conversation was soon renewed, and Oscar at last fell into the snare the perfidious Belgrave had spread, thus, by a deviation from truth, forfeiting the blessings a bounteous Providence had prepared for him.

Soon after his fatal promise to Belgrave, a self-devoted victim, he accompanied him to Woodlawn: Oscar trembling went to seek Adela: and found her sitting in a flower-woven arbour. The moment she beheld Oscar, her eyes beamed with the softest tenderness. "My dear, dear Fitzalan!" cried she, "I hope you are come to take up your residence for some time at Woodlawn. But bless me! what's the matter! you look so pale and thin, like a despairing shepherd, ready to hang himself on the first willow he meets." "I am indeed unhappy!" cried Oscar; "nor will

you wonder at my being so when I acknowledge, I at this moment feel a passion I must believe hopeless." "Hopeless! well, I insist on being your confident, and then (smiling archly) I shall see what reason you have to despair."—"Agreed," cried Oscar,—“No,” continued he, “I find it impossible to tell it,—let this dear, this inestimable object,” drawing a miniature of his sister from his bosom, “speak for me, and declare if he who loves such a being can lose that love, or help being wretched at knowing it is without hope.”

Adela snatched it from him: words are inadequate to express her heart-rending emotion as she contemplated the beautiful face of her imaginary rival; and was Oscar then really attached to another? alas; of this attachment she held a convincing proof in her hand, and with a shivering horror she dropped it. Oscar had quitted the arbour to conceal his agonies. “Well,” said he, now returning with forced calmness, “is it not worthy the passion I feel?” Unable to answer him, she could only point to the place where it lay, and hastened to the house.

Adela, on reaching the parlour found her father there; “Ah! you little baggage, where is that young rogue Fitzalan?”—“I beg, I entreat, Sir,” said Adela, whose tears could no longer be restrained, “you will never mention him to me again.” “Nay, prithee my little girl,” exclaimed the General, “cease thy tears, and tell me what’s the matter.” “I am hurt,” replied she, “that so much has been said about Mr Fitzalan, who I can never regard as other than a common acquaintance.” The Colonel who had purposely lingered about the wood, now entered. Adela retreated through another door. “Faith my dear Colonel,” said the General, “I am glad you are come, the boy and girl have had a little skirmish, but I suppose it will soon be made up, so let me know how the lad bore the announcement of his good fortune.” “It fills my mind with regret,” replied the Colonel,

“to inform you; but he pleaded a prior attachment against accepting your offer, which one more exalted would not make him forego, though he knows not if he will ever succeed in it.” “The devil he did!” exclaimed the General, as soon as rage and surprise would allow him to speak, “the little impertinent puppy! a prior attachment, so I suppose I shall have the whole affair blazed about the country how my daughter was refused, and by whom? why by a little ensign, whose whole fortune lies in his sword knot.”—“Dear General,” said the Colonel, “you may depend on his honour; but you surely know it could not be in his power to injure Miss Honeywood—possessed, as she is, of every perfection, I know men, at least one man, of consequence, who has long sighed for her.” “Well,” cried the general, still panting for breath, “We’ll talk about him at some future time; for I am resolved on soon having my little girl married, and to her own liking too.”

Oscar and Adela did not appear till dinner-time, both had been endeavouring to regain composure; but poor Oscar had been far less successful than Adela; not that she loved him less, but her pride was as great as her susceptibility, and she resolved to afford Oscar no triumph by witnessing her dejection; as she sat at table, she tried to appear cheerful, but in vain; and on the removal of the cloth immediately retired.

The General was a stranger to dissimulation, and as he no longer felt, he no longer treated Oscar with his usual kindness; his situation grew too irksome to be borne, and he rose unregarded from the table, a secret impulse led him to the drawing-room. Here Adela, oppressed by dejection, had flung herself upon a couch, and sunk into a slumber; Oscar gazed upon her with a tenderness, exquisite as a mother viewing her sleeping babe; her cheek was tinged with a flush, and a tear was yet discernible upon it. “Never,” cried Oscar, “may any tear, except that of soft

sensibility for the woes of others bedew the cheek of Adela,—perfect as her goodness be her felicity,”—Adela now began to stir, she murmured out some inarticulate words, and rising suddenly from the couch, beheld the motionless form of Fitzalan; and haughtily asked him the meaning of such an intrusion. “I did not mean indeed to intrude,” said he, “but when I found you here, can you wonder at my being fascinated to the spot?” His plaintive tone sank to Adela’s heart; Oscar forgot the character he assumed in the morning, and gently seized her hand, he pressed it to his bosom; at this critical moment, when mutual sympathy appeared on the point of triumphing over duplicity, the door opened, and Belgrave appeared; fearful of the consequences of a tête-a-tête, he had followed Oscar, and was attended by the rest of the gentlemen.

Oscar was determined on not staying another night at Woodlawn, “Why hang it, boy,” cried the General, in a rough grumbling voice, “since you have stayed so long, you may as well stay the night, the clouds threaten a storm.” “No, sir,” said Oscar, “the raging of a tempest would not make me stay.” Adela sighed, but pride prevented her speaking. Fitzalan approached. “Miss Honeywood,” said he—he stopped, his voice was quite stifled, “lest I should not,” resumed he, “have the happiness of again visiting Woodlawn, I cannot neglect this opportunity of assuring you that the severest pang my heart could possibly experience, would result from thinking I lost any part of the friendship you and the General honoured me with” Adela bent her head, and Oscar, seeing she either would not, or could not speak, hurried from the room, and snatching his hat from the hall table, darted out of the house; he ran till he came to the margin of the lake, a cold blast howled among the hills, and agitated the gloomy waters of the lake; the rain, accompanied by sleet, began to fall, but the tempest raged unregarded

around the child of sorrow. Some fishermen approaching to secure their boats, drove him from his situation, and he flew to the wood: there sinking with weakness from the conflicts of his mind, he sought an old roofless root-house: where he and Adela had often sat.—“Well,” said he, as he flung himself upon the damp ground, “many a brave fellow has had a worse bed.” It was late the next day, ere he arrived at Enniskillen, he was met by some of the officers, who viewed him with astonishment; his regimentals were spoiled, his fine hair, from which the rain had washed all the powder, hung about his shoulders: and the disorder of his countenance was not less suspicious than that of his dress; to their enquiries he stammered out something of a fall.

In an obscure village, fifteen miles from Enniskillen, a detachment of the regiment lay, the officer who commanded it, disliked his situation; but company being irksome to Oscar, he desired and obtained leave to relieve him: the agitation of his mind, aided by the effects of the storm he had been exposed to, was too much for his constitution: and he was immediately seized with a violent fever; an officer was sent to do duty in his place: and when at last he was able to sit up, he was ordered to return to Enniskillen, where he could be under the immediate care of the regimental surgeon.

As the carriage drove slowly by Mrs. Marlowe's orchard, he could not resist the desire of seeing her, and inquiring after the inhabitants of Woodlawn, for with Mrs. Marlowe, he had not only formed an intimacy, but a sincere friendship.

The evening was far advanced when Oscar, leaning on his servant, slowly walked up the garden: had a spectre appeared, the old lady could not have seemed more shocked than she now did, at the unexpected and emaciated appearance of her young friend.—With all the tenderness of a mother, she pressed his cold hands between her own, and seated him by a cheer-

ful fire, then procured him refreshment, which, joined to her conversation, a little revived his spirits. "Our friends at Woodlawn, I hope,"—cried he, he paused—"Are quite well and happy," replied Mrs. Marlowe, "and you know, I suppose, all that has lately happened there."—"No, I know nothing, I am as one awoke from the grave."—"Ere I inform you then," cried Mrs. Marlowe, "let me express my admiration of your disinterested conduct, which preferred constancy to the independency offered to your acceptance." "What independency did I refuse?" asked Oscar, "That which the General offered."—"The General!"—"Yes, and appointed Colonel Belgrave to declare his intentions."—"Oh heavens!" exclaimed Oscar, starting from his chair, "has Belgrave then deceived me? he told me my attentions to Miss Honeywood were noticed and disliked, and persuaded me to a falsehood that has plunged me in despair, but no, I will fly to the General, I will open my whole soul to him, and Adela shall yet be mine."—"Alas! said Mrs. Marlowe, stopping him as he was hurrying from the room, "it is now too late, Adela can never be yours, she is married, and married to Belgrave." Oscar fell senseless at her feet: he was laid upon a bed, but it was long ere he showed any signs of recovery. Mrs. Marlowe knelt beside him; "Oh! my friend," said she, "my heart sympathizes in your sorrow, but it is from your own fortitude, more than my sympathy, you must now derive support."—"Oh, horrible! to know the cup of happiness was at my lips, and that it was my own hand dashed it from me:" said Oscar, "but do you think I will calmly submit to his baseness? No! Belgrave shall never triumph over me with impunity!" he started from his bed, and snatched his sword from the table: Mrs. Marlowe caught his arm, "Rash young man," exclaimed she, "whither would you go? suppose your vengeance gratified, think you Adela would ever notice the murderer of her

husband, how unworthy soever that husband might be? The sword dropped from his hand; and Mrs. Marlowe seized this moment to advise and reason with him; her tears mingled with his, as she listened to Belgrave's perfidy: she convinced Oscar, however, that it would be prudent to confine the fatal secret to their own breasts: the agitation of his mind was too much for the weak state of his health; the fever returned, and it was long ere he was able to quit the bed of sickness.

The General was stung to the soul by the rejection of his offer: never had his pride been so humiliated: and when he reflected on it, it drove him at times almost to madness; his mortifying reflections the Colonel soon found means to remove, by the most delicate flattery: and thus gradually became a favourite, and when he insinuated his attachment for Adela, was assured he should have all the General's interest with her; on the first overture about him she requested the subject might be entirely dropped. The Colonel was not discouraged by her coldness, he was in the habit of conquering difficulties, and doubted not he should overcome any she threw in his way.

Some weeks had elapsed since Oscar's voluntary exile, and sanguine as were the Colonel's hopes, he found without a stratagem they would not be realized, (at least as soon as he expected) he was not long in concerting one; he followed Adela one morning into the garden, and found her reading in the arbour: she laid aside her book, and they chatted for some time on indifferent subjects; the Colonel's servant at last appeared with a large packet of letters, which he presented to his master, who, with a hesitating air, was about putting them into his pocket, when Adela prevented him:—"Make no ceremony," said she, "I shall resume my book till you have done." Her attention was soon drawn from her book by the sudden emotion he made, he started and exclaimed, "Oh,

heavens! what a wretch ;” then as if suddenly recollecting his situation, he looked at Adela, stammered out a few inarticulate words, and resumed his letter : when finished, he seemed to put it into his pocket ; but in reality dropped it, for the basest purpose ; he ran over the other letters, and entreated Adela to excuse his leaving her to answer some of them. Soon after his departure Adela perceived an open letter lying at her feet : she took it up with the intention of returning to the house with it, when her own name in capital letters, and in Fitzalan’s well known hand, struck her sight : an universal tremor seized her, she would have given any consideration to know why she was mentioned in a correspondence between Belgrave and Fitzalan : her eye involuntarily glanced at the letter : she saw some words in it which excited still more strongly her curiosity : it could no longer be suppressed, and she read the following.

“ To Colonel Belgrave.

“ You accuse me of insensibility, to what you call the matchless charms of Adela, an accusation I acknowledge I merit : but why ? because I have been too susceptible to those of another, which in the fond estimation of a lover, (at least) appear infinitely superior. The General’s offer was certainly a most generous and flattering one, and has gratified every feeling of my soul, by giving me an opportunity of sacrificing at the shrine of love, ambition and self interest : my disinterested conduct has confirmed me in the affections of my dear girl. Would to heaven the General were propitious to your wishes, it would yield me much happiness to see you, my first and best friend, in possession of a treasure you have long sighed for : I shall, no doubt, receive a long lecture from you for letting the affair relative to Adela be made known, but faith, I could not resist telling my charmer : heaven grant discretion may seal her lips, if not, I suppose I shall be summoned to formid-

able combat with the old General, adieu! and believe me,

Dear Colonel,
Ever yours,
Oscar Fitzalan."

"Wretch!" cried the agitated Adela, dropping the letter (which was an infamous forgery) "is this the return we meet with for wishing to raise you to prosperity?" She sunk upon the bench, her head resting upon her hands, and sighs, and tears burst from her: at this moment the Colonel softly advanced and stood before her: by her confusion she doubted not but he would suspect her of having perused the fatal letter: "What a careless fellow am I!" said the Colonel, taking up the letter which he then pretended to perceive; he glanced at Adela: "Curse it, I would rather have had all the letters read than this one." He suspects me, thought Adela, and fell back in her seat. Belgrave flew to support her: "Loveliest of women," he exclaimed, "what means this agitation?" She motioned to return to the house. "Thus," answered the Colonel, "you always fly me, yet, be assured," and he summoned a tear to his aid, while he pressed her hand to his bosom, "a heart more truly devoted to you than mine, you can never meet: but, since I dare not aspire to a higher, allow me, at least, the title of friend."—"Most willingly," said Adela, penetrated by his gentleness; and he now prevailed on her to walk instead of returning to the house: she felt soothed by his attention, and knowing he resented the disrespectful mention of her name in Fitzalan's letter: in short, she felt esteem and respect for him, contempt and resentment for Oscar. The Colonel was too penetrating not to discover her sentiments: had Adela indeed obeyed the dictates of her heart she would have declared against marrying: but pride urged her to a step which would prove to Fitzalan his conduct had not affected her; and thus,

in an unpropitious hour, she gave her hand to the perfidious Belgrave.

About a fortnight after her nuptials she heard from one of the officers of Oscar's illness: "Faith," cried one of them. "Mrs. Marlowe is a charming woman, I really believe elsewhere he would have given up the ghost." "Poor fellow," said Adela, sighing heavily, yet unconsciously. Belgrave rose, he looked as if he would pierce into the recesses of her heart; she shuddered, and, for the first time, felt the tyranny she had imposed upon herself. As Mrs. Marlowe chose to be silent on the subject, she resolved not to mention it to her; but she sent every day to invite her to Woodlawn. At the end of a fortnight she made her appearance; she looked pale and thin; Adela gently reproached her for her long absence, trusting this would oblige her to allege the reason of it, but no such thing: Mrs. Marlowe began to converse on indifferent subjects, Adela grew peevish, and sullenly sat at her work,

A few days after this, Adela one evening ordered her carriage to the cottage; by this time she supposed Oscar had left it: intending to surprise her friend, she softly stole to the parlour door; but what were her feelings when she perceived Oscar sitting by the fire-side with Mrs. Marlowe? she stopped, unable to advance; the emotions of Oscar were not inferior to those of Adela; he attempted to rise, but could not; at length, somewhat reanimated, he rose and approached her. "Allow me, Madam," cried he, to—the sentence died unfinished on his lips. "Oh a truce with compliments," said Mrs. Marlowe, "prithee, good folks, let us be seated, and enjoy, this cold evening, the comforts of a good fire." The cold formality, the distant reserve Adela and Oscar assumed filled each with sorrow and regret. Mrs. Marlowe, in a laughing way, told her the trouble she had had with Oscar; "For which, I assure you," said she, "he rewards me badly; for the moment he was en-

larged from the nursery, he either forgot or neglected the all rules I had laid down for him. Pray do join your commands to mine, and charge him to take more care of himself." "I would most willingly," cried Adela, "if I thought it would influence him." "Influence!" repeated Oscar, "Oh, heavens!" then starting up, he hurried to the window, as if to hide and indulge his melancholy. The scene he viewed from it was dreary and desolate, it was now the latter end of autumn: the evening was cold, a savage blast howled from the hills, and the sky was darkened by a coming storm. Mrs. Marlowe roused him from his reverie, "I am sure," said she, "the prospect you view can have no great attraction at present." "And yet," cried he, "there is something sadly pleasing in it, the leafless trees, and fading flowers of autumn, excite in my bosom a kind of mournful sympathy; they are emblems to me of him whose tenderest hopes have been disappointed; but, unlike him, they, after a short period, shall again flourish with primeval beauty." Mrs. Marlowe wished to change the subject entirely: she rung for tea, and endeavoured, by her conversation, to enliven the tea-table; the effort, however, was not seconded. "You have often," cried she to Adela, as they again drew their chairs round the fire, "desired to hear the particulars of my life; and as nothing better now offers for passing away the hours, I will, if you please, relate them."—"You will oblige me by so doing," cried Adela, "my curiosity, you know, has been long excited."

CHAPTER XIII.

Deny'd her sight, he often crept
 Beneath the hawthorn shade;
 To mark the spot in which she wept—
 In which she wept and pray'd.

THE night was waning fast, and Adela rose to de-

part as her friend concluded her story, it was dark and wet, which prevented Mrs. Marlowe from accompanying her to the carriage: not so Oscar; he took the umbrella from the servant who held it for his mistress. "Oscar," cried Mrs. Marlowe, extremely unwilling to allow even this short tête-a-tête, "Mrs. Belgrave will dispense with your gallantry, for you are really too great an invalid to venture out such a night as this." Adela attempted to dissuade him, but her voice was scarcely articulate. The light from the globes of the carriage showed him her pale lovely cheeks, and he saw she was weeping; she averted her head, and hastily ascended the steps: yet for a moment, her trembling hand rested on Oscar's, as if, in this manner, she would give him the adieu she could not pronounce. Lost in agony, he remained on the spot where she had left him, till Mrs. Marlowe, alarmed at his long absence, came to seek him; he directly returned with her to the house.

Mrs. Marlowe essayed every art of consolation, and at last subdued the violence of his feelings: she entreated him to avoid Adela—he felt she was right, and solemnly promised to comply with it: her society was the only pleasure he was now capable of enjoying; and whenever he could absent himself from quarters he retired to her and frequently spent three or four days at the cottage. That tender friend hoped from youth, and the natural gaiety of his disposition, his attachment, no longer fed by hope, would gradually decline; but she was mistaken, the bloom of youth was faded, and his gaiety was converted into deep despondency, the horror and indignation with which he first beheld Belgrave, could scarcely be restrained; but delicacy on Adela's account induced him to bear his wrongs in silence.

The unfortunate Adela pined in secret. Her interview with Oscar had destroyed the small remainder of her peace; his pale and emaciated figure haunted her imagination; in vain, by dwelling on his

unkind letter, did she endeavour to lessen her tenderness: she felt the emotions of friendship stronger than resentment, and that the friendship of Oscar would have been sweeter to her soul, than the love and attention of any other. The softness of Belgrave's manner gradually vanished; unfeeling and depraved, the virtues of Adela could excite no esteem in his bosom; but as the General retained the greatest part of his fortune in his own power, he continued tolerably guarded in his conduct; a slave, however, to the most violent passions, he was often unable to control them, and delighted at these times in mortifying Adela, by sly sarcasm on her attachment for Oscar; though deeply wounded, she never complained: tranquil in appearance, the poor General thought his darling perfectly happy.

The Colonel made frequent excursions to the metropolis and other parts, in pursuit of pleasure. Adela felt relieved by his absence. The period now arrived for the departure of the regiment; Oscar sickened at the idea of quitting the country without seeing Adela; he knew she was not to accompany the Colonel: the officers were going to pay a farewell visit to Woodlawn, and he could not resist being of the party; Adela was startled at Oscar's appearance, but she soon recovered her composure. "My dear Fitzalan," said the General, who had long dropped his displeasure, "I hope I shall soon see you at the head of a company, your father was a brave fellow and in the speedy advancement of his son, should receive a reward for his past services." Oscar pressed the General's hand to his heart, he cast his tearful eyes on Adela, she sighed, and bent hers to the ground. "Be assured, sir," he cried, "no wishes can be more sincere than mine for the happiness of the inhabitants of Woodland."—"Ineffectual wishes," softly exclaimed Adela, "happiness from one of its inhabitants, at least, has fled, I fear, for ever.

The General's wishes for Oscar's success may be

considered as mere words, but in reality, soon after his daughter's marriage, he had mentioned to the Colonel his willingness to give a thousand or two to help the promotion of Oscar. But Belgrave, who could not bear that the man he had injured should have a chance of obtaining equal rank with himself, opposed his design, by saying, "Oscar was taken under the patronage of Lord Cherbury."

Change of scene produced no alteration in Oscar, still pining with regret, languid with ill health: his father and his sister found him. As he pressed his sister to his heart, had he imagined she was the object of Belgrave's licentious passion, the bounds of his resentment would, in a moment, have been overturned, and he would, had it been necessary, have pursued the monster round the world, to avenge the injury he had meditated, as well as the one he had committed.

We shall now bid adieu to Oscar for the present and step after Eitzalan and Amanda.

CHAPTER XIV.

Confess'd from yonder slow extinguish'd clouds,
All other softening, sober evening takes
Her wonted station in the middle air;
A thousand shadows at her back. *Thompson.*

CASTLE Carberry, to which our travellers were going, was a large gothic pile erected in the rude and distant ages, when strength, more than elegance, was deemed necessary in a building: depredations of war, as well as time, were discernible on its exterior; it stood upon a rocky eminence, over-hanging the sea, and commanding a delightful prospect of the opposite coast of Scotland; on one side rose a stupendous hill, covered to the very summit with trees, and before it stretched an extensive and gently swelling lawn.

After a pleasant journey, on the evening of the

fourth day, our travellers arrived. An old man and woman who had the care of it, on the first approach of the carriage, opened the massy door, and waited to receive them. They were shown into a large parlour, furnished in an old-fashioned manner, and found a comfortable supper prepared for them; oppressed with fatigue, soon after they had partaken of it, they retired to rest. The next morning, Amanda, attended by the old woman and Ellen, ranged over the Castle: its interior was quite as gothic as its exterior: the portraits of the Chiefs of Carberry, with those of their ladies, occupied a long gallery, which was terminated by a small apartment in the centre of one of the towers: the room was an octagon, and commanded a sea and land prospect: the furniture was not only modern, but elegant, and excited the attention and enquiries of Amanda.—The old woman informed her this had been the dressing-room of the late Countess of Cherbury, both before and after her marriage, “one of the sweetest, kindest ladies,” continued she, “I ever knew.” “Did you ever see the young lord?” asked Amanda, with involuntary precipitation. “See him? Aye that I did, when he was about eight years old: there is his picture,” pointing to one which hung over the chimney. The eager eyes of Amanda were instantly turned to it, and she traced, or imagined she did so, a resemblance still between it and him. Lord Mortimer, like the description of pity, was represented sheltering a trembling dove in his bosom, from a hawk. Oh, Mortimer, thought Amanda, thy feeling nature is here ably delineated: the distressed, or the helpless, to the utmost of your power, you would save from cruelty and oppression. Her father had desired her to choose pleasant apartments for her own use, and she accordingly fixed upon this and the room adjoining it, which had been Lady Cherbury’s chamber: which her father declared in future he would call Amanda’s Tower. Accompanied by him, she ascended to the battlements of the

Castle, at some distance she beheld a spacious edifice which attracted her admiration: her father told her it was Ulster Lodge, a seat belonging to the Marquis of Rosline, who was an Irish as well as Scotch Peer. Fitzalan added he had been enquiring of the old man about the neighbourhood, and learned that every three or four years, the Marquis came over to Ulster Lodge, but had never yet been accompanied by the Marchioness, nor Lady Euphrasia Sutherland, who was his only child.

Fitzalan felt a pleasing serenity diffused over his mind, from the idea of being in some degree independent, and in the way of making some provision for his children. The first shock of separation from Lord Mortimer being over, the cheerfulness of Amanda gradually returned: she judged of his constancy by her own. She acknowledged her father's motives for separating them were just and delicate: but firmly believed if Lord Mortimer (as she flattered herself he would) confessed a partiality in her favour to his father, he would immediately sanction their union. Her time was agreeably diversified by the sources of amusement she drew from herself: with her father she took long walks about the country: he had visited every scene before, and now pointed out whatever was worthy her attention.

On a morning, when she sat at work in her apartment, Ellen sometimes sat with her: the conversation frequently turned on nurse Edwin's cottage, from which Ellen, with arch simplicity, would avert to Tudor-hall, thence naturally to Lord Mortimer, and conclude with poor Chip, exclaiming, "What a pity true love should ever be crossed!"

CHAPTER. XV.

Some take him for a tool
 That knaves do work with, call'd a fool;
 Fools are known by looking wise,
 As men find woodcocks by their eyes. *Ibid.*

THE solitude of Castle Carberry was interrupted in less than a fortnight by visits and invitations. The first they accepted was to dinner at Mr. Kilcorban's; he was a man of large fortune, which, in the opinion of many, compensated for his want of polished manners, and cultivated mind. His lady was like himself, a compound of ignorance, pride, and vanity; their offspring was numerous, and the three who were old enough to make their appearance, were considered by their parents, and themselves, the very models of elegance and perfection. The young heir had been sent to the university; but had profited but little there; his face was coarse, his person inelegant, and his taste in adorning himself preposterously ridiculous. Hoyle, and the looking-glass were his chief studies, and by his family and self, he was considered quite the thing.

The young ladies were thought to be very accomplished, but in reality, they understood little more than the names of what they were attempted to be taught: nature had not been lavish of her gifts—of this however, they were conscious, and patched, powdered, and painted, in the very extremity of the mode.

Mr. Kilcorban had indulged his family in a trip to Bath one autumn, and in so doing, had afforded a never-failing subject for conversation.

Lady Greystock, an ancient widow, was at present on a visit to them: she had known Fitzalan in his youth, and now, with pleasure, renewed her intimacy with him, and the account she gave of his family and connections, prepossessed the neighbourhood in his favour.

An old chariot belonging to the Earl of Cherbury unused for years, was brought forth to convey Fitzalan and his daughter on their visit. A numerous party was already assembled. While Amanda was paying her compliments to Mrs. Kilcorban and Lady Greystock, a general whisper relative to her took place among the younger part of the family. One gentleman swore "she was a devilish fine girl." He was seconded by another, who extolled her complexion.—"You are a simpleton," cried a young lady, who was reckoned a great wit, "I would engage for half a crown, to get as fine a colour in Dublin." Her companions laughed, and declared she only spoke the truth. Mr. Bryan Kilcorban, who leaned upon her chair, said, "a bill should be brought into the house to try such complexions; for kill me," continued he, "the ladies are so irresistible from nature, it is quite unconscionable to call in art as an auxiliary." He then stalked over to Amanda, lolling over her chair, he declared, "he thought the tedious hours would never elapse till again blessed with her presence." A summons to dinner relieved her from this nonsense. When the ladies returned to the drawing-room, the Miss Kilcorbans, and their companions began to examine and admire Amanda's dress. "What a pretty pattern this gown is worked in!" cried one.—"What a sweet becoming cap this is!" cried a second. "My dear," said Miss Kilcorban, whispering to Amanda, "I have a monstrous favour to ask of you, it is only to refuse the pattern of your cap to any girls who may ask for it, and to give it me and my sister: you cannot conceive how we dote on being the first in the fashion, one is so stared at, so envied; if you allow us, my sister and I will call upon you to-morrow to look over your things."—"It would be giving yourselves a great deal of unnecessary trouble," replied Amanda coolly, who did not by any means relish this forward proposal,—"my things can boast of little but simplicity, and

I am always my own milliner."—"Really! well, I protest you have a great deal of taste; my maid would, I think be able to make up things in much the same style, if your were to give her the patterns; if you do, perhaps you will add to the favour, and allow us to say they are the newest Bath fashions. Were you ever at Bath?" "No."—"Oh, then I assure you, you have a monstrous pleasure to come: it is quite a paradise; papa has been inexorable ever since to our entreaties for a second trip; he says the first cost too much money; indeed it was an enormous sum, only think how much?"—"I am the worst person in the world for guessing," said Amanda, sick of her impertinent volubility.

Lady Greystock now beckoned our heroine to take a seat by her: she gladly obeyed. "Well, my dear," said her ladyship, "I hope you have had enough of these country misses—those would be misses of the ton." Amanda smiled assentingly.

Mr Bryan Kilcorban, with some gentlemen, now entered, and advanced to Amanda. "So," said he, "you have got by the Dowager: hang me, but I would let my beard grow, if all women resembled her in their dispositions." "By way of appearing sagacious, I suppose," said her ladyship, who was extremely quick, and had caught the last words, "Alas! poor youth, no embellishment on the exterior would ever be able to make us believe the tenement within well furnished."

After tea Amanda was prevailed upon to sit down to commerce: but she soon grew as tired of the party as of the game, and lost on purpose to be released. Kilcorban on finding her disengaged, tormented her with many absurd compliments: a challenge to a card-table at length relieved her from his nonsense, and she loitered about the card-table till they broke up.

CHAPTER XVI.

Remote from man, with God they pass'd their days,
Prayer all their business, all their pleasure praise.

Parnel.

THE following evening they were engaged to spend at a farmer's: the invitation was given with such humility, yet pressed with such warmth, that they could not avoid accepting it, and accordingly soon after dinner walked to the house, which was about a mile from Castle Carberry. It was a low thatched building, every appendage to it bespoke neatness and comfort: it was situated in a beautiful meadow, and on one side lay an extensive common, on which stood the stupendous and venerable ruins of an Abbey, called St. Catherine's.

The farmer's family consisted of three daughters and two sons, who were dressed in their best array. They had assembled a number of their neighbours, among whom were a little fat priest, called father O'Gallaghan, considered the life of every party, and a blind piper: the room was small, and only divided from the kitchen by a short passage, and the steam of hot cakes, and the smoke of a turf fire, which issued thence, soon rendered it distressingly warm. As every thing for tea was not quite ready, Amanda asked one of the Miss O'Flannaghans if she would accompany her to St. Catherine's. She assented. The priest who had been smirking at her ever since her entrance, now shook his fat sides, and said, "he wished he could get her initiated there: for it would do my soul good," cried he, "to confess such a pretty little creature as you are, tho' faith, I believe I should find you like Paddy M'Denough, who used to come to confession every Easter, tho' the devil a thing the poor man had to confess about at all, at all: so 'says I to him, Paddy, my jewel,' says I, 'I believe I must make a saint of you, and lay you on the Altar.'—

‘Oh! honey father,’ cried he, ‘not yet awhile, till I get a new suit of clothes on, which I shall by next Michaelmas.’” Amanda left them all laughing at this story.

After she had traversed the spacious cloisters of the Abbey, Miss O’Flannaghan led her through some more windings, and suddenly emerging from them, she found herself to her great surprise, in a large garden, in the centre stood a long low building, which her companion informed her was a Convent: a folding door opened into a chapel, which they entered, and found a nun praying.

Amanda drew back; but Miss O’Flannaghan accosted her without ceremony, which the nun returned with cordial good humour: she was about fifty, as Amanda afterwards heard; for she could not from her appearance, have conceived her so much. Miss O’Flannaghan presented Amanda to her as a stranger, who wished to see everything curious in the chapel. “Ah! my honey,” cried she, “I am sorry she is come at a time when she will see us in the dismals, for you know we are in mourning for our prioress; The nun obligingly proceeded to show her all the rules and finery of the chapel; she also displayed a quantity of artificial flowers, made by the sisters and their scholars. Amanda finding they were to be sold, purchased a number, and having given some to Miss O’Flannaghan, she left the rest with the nun, promising to call for them the ensuing day.—“Ay, do,” said she, “and you may be sure of a sincere welcome.” Miss O’Flannaghan now reminded Amanda it was time to return. The nun pressed her to stay tea, but on hearing of her engagement, only reminded her of her promised visit. In their walk back, her companion informed Amanda that the society consisted of twelve nuns; and added that they were allowed to go out, but few availed themselves of that liberty, and that, except in fasting, they were strangers to the austerities practised in foreign convents.

Father O'Gallaghan met them at the door, and familiarly taking Amanda's hand, said, "Why, you have stayed long enough to be made a nun of: here the cakes are buttered, the tea made, and we are all waiting for you. Ah! you little rogue," smirking in her face, "by the the hand of St. Patrick, those twinklers of yours were not given for the good of your soul; here you are come to play pell-mell among the honest Irish lads." Amanda disengaged her hand and entered the parlour, where the company, by a display of pocket-handkerchiefs on their laps, seemed prepared to make a downright good meal of the good things before them. The table at length removed, the signal for a dance was given by the pipers playing an Irish jig. The farmer's eldest son, habited in his new sky-blue coat, advanced to our heroine, and begged she would do him the favour to stand up with him. She hesitated a little, when Father O'Gallaghan giving her a slap on the shoulder, made her start suddenly from her seat. He laughed heartily at this, and as he could not dance himself, he consoled himself with being master of the ceremonies, and insisted on Amanda's dancing and leading off the Priest in his boots, and being directed in the figure by him she went down the dance. She and Fitzalan would gladly have declined staying to supper but this they found impossible.

The table was covered with a profusion of good fare, and none seemed to enjoy it more truly than the Priest; in the intervals of eating, his jests flew about in every direction, the scope he gave to his vivacity exhilarated the rest, so that, like Falstaff, he was not only witty himself, but a promoter of wit in others. Fitzalan was surprised at the freedom with which they treated the priest; but he laughed as merrily as the rest at what they said, for he knew they neither wished nor attempted to shake off his power.

The next morning Amanda repaired to the Convent, sister Mary, the nun she had seen the preced-

ing evening, was delighted at seeing her, and led her through the house, and then to a parlour, where their new prioress sat. She was a woman far advanced in life. Had a painter wanted to personify benevolence, he might have chosen her for a model,—so soft, so benignant was her countenance. She received Amanda with the truest politeness, and most friendly warmth. Sister Mary disappeared, but returned in a few minutes with cake and currant wine; the good sister was enchanted with her young visitor, and had no idea of concealing her feelings. “Dear mother,” said she to the prioress, “is she not a lovely creature? Oh, if our blessed lady would but touch her heart, and make her one of us, I should be so happy.” The prioress smiled. “It would be a pity,” said she, “to hide so sweet a flower amid the ruins of St. Catherine’s.”

Just as Amanda reached Castle Carberry, she saw Kilcorban’s carriage stop at it, from which Lady Greystock and the young ladies alighted; they both spoke at once, and so extremely fast, that Amanda scarcely understood what they said. They declared that a thousand impertinent visitors had prevented them coming the preceding morning, and looking at the things she had promised to shew them. Amanda recollected no such promise, but permitted their taking what patterns they liked. Lady Greystock smiled sarcastically at her young kinswomen, and expressed a wish to see the Castle. Amanda led her through it. Her ladyship was particularly pleased with the dressing-room. Here the the young ladies, with rude and eager curiosity, examined every thing, they assured Amanda they had conceived a great friendship for her, and hoped she would often favour them with her company. Amanda answered their insincere professions with cool civility, and the visitors departed.

CHAPTER XVII.

Oh! fields, Oh! woods, when, when shall I be made
The happy tenant of your shade? *Cowley.*

SOLITUDE to Amanda was a luxury, as it afforded her opportunities of indulging the ideas on which her heart delighted to dwell: she yet believed she should see Lord Mortimer, and that Lord Cherbury's sanctioning their attachment, would remove the delicate scruples of her father: she was never at a loss for amusement within Castle Carberry, or about its domain; the garden became the object of her peculiar care, its situation was romantic, and long neglect had added to its natural wildness. But no visionary pleasures, no delightful rambles, no domestic avocations made her forgetful to the calls of benevolence; she visited the haunts of poverty, and relieved its necessities to the utmost of her power.

Amanda was roused one morning by the entrance of the Kilcorbans and Lady Greystock into the dressing-room where she was working. "Oh, my dear," cried the eldest of the young ladies, "we have such enchanting news to tell you: only think who is coming down here immediately: your uncle and aunt, and cousin; an express came this morning from Dublin, where they now are, to the steward at Ulster Lodge, to have every thing prepared for them next week." "I declare," said Miss Alicia, "I shall quite envy you the delightful amusement you will have with them." Amanda blushed and looked a little confused; "you will have no reason then, I fancy," replied she, "for I really do not know them."

"They say Lady Euphrasia Sutherland is very accomplished," exclaimed Miss Kilcorban, "so a correspondence with her would have been delightful. I dare say you write sweetly yourself, so if you ever leave Castle Carberry, I beg you will favour me with

letters, for of all things, I dote on a sentimental correspondence."

"No wonder," said Lady Greystock, "you are so particularly well qualified to support one."

"But my dear," resumed Miss Kilcorban, "we are to give the most enchanting ball that ever was given in this world: we are to have confectioners and French cooks from Dublin, every thing is to be quite in style, and prepared against the third night of the Marchioness's, arrival: so, my dear, you and your papa must hold yourselves in readiness." Amanda bowed. "My sister and I are to have dancing dresses from town, I assure you, you will be absolutely surprised and charmed when you see them;—all the elegant men in the country will be at our entertainment; I dare say you will be vastly busy preparing for it."

"Nature," said Lady Greystock, "has been too bounteous to Miss Fitzalan, to render such preparations necessary."—"Oh, Lord!" cried the young ladies, with a toss of their heads, "Miss Fitzalan is not such a fool I suppose, as to wish to appear unlike every one else in dress: but," rising with their mama, and saluting her much more formally than they had done at their entrance, "she is the best judge of that."

Fitzalan had not seen the Marchioness since his marriage, nor did he ever wish again to behold her, the inhumanity with which she had treated her lovely sister excited sentiments of distaste and aversion for her: he considered her as the usurper of his children's rights: as accessory to the death of his adored Malvina, and consequently the author of all the agonies he endured, agonies which time, aided by religion, could scarcely conquer.

CHAPTER XVIII.

Oh love, how are thy precious, sweetest minutes
 Thus ever cross'd, thus vexed, with disappointments :
 Now pride, now fickleness, fantastic quarrels,
 And sullen coldness gives us pain by turns. *Rowe.*

AT the expected time the Marquis and his family arrived with great splendour at Ulster Lodge, which was immediately crowded with visitors of the first consequence in the county, among whom were the Kilcorbans. Mr. Kilcorban wished, indeed, to be first in paying his compliments to the Marquis, who had a borough at his disposal he was desirous to be returned for: disappointed the last time he put up for the county, this was his only chance of entering that house he had long been ambitious for a seat in.

The female part of his family went from Ulster Lodge to Castle Carberry; instead of flying up to Amanda, as usual, the young ladies swam into the room, with what they imagined a most bewitching elegance, and making a sliding courtesy, flung themselves upon a sofa, exactly opposite a glass, and alternately viewed themselves, and pursued their remarks on Lady Euphrasia's dress.

"This aunt of yours, my dear," exclaimed Mrs. Kilcorban, "is really a personable looking woman enough, and her daughter a pretty little sort of a body."

"Oh, they are charming creatures," cried both of the young ladies, "so elegant, so irresistibly genteel."

"Your ideas and mine then," said Lady Greystock, "differ widely about elegance and irresistibility, if you ascribe either to the ladies in question. When the ladies received us, the Marchioness advanced about two steps from her couch, and Lady Euphrasia half rose from her seat, and after contemplating us for a minute, as if to know if we were to be considered as human creatures or not, she sunk back into her

former attitude of elegant langour, and continued her conversation with a young nobleman, who had accompanied them from England." "Well, I hope you will allow he is a divine creature," exclaimed Miss Kilcorban, rapturously.

"Lord Mortimer, indeed," said Lady Greystock:—Amanda started, turned pale, and panted as if for breath. "Bless me, Miss Fitzalan," said her Ladyship "are you ill?" "No, madam," replied Amanda in a trembling voice, "'tis only—'tis only a little palpitation of the heart I am subject to: but pray proceed." "Well," continued Lady Greystock, "I was saying that Lord Mortimer was one of the most elegant and engaging young men I ever beheld, his expressive eyes seemed to reprove the folly of his fair companion, which to me was a most convincing proof of a noble mind."

"I assure you, Miss," said Mrs. Kilcorban, "I did not forget to tell the Marchioness she had a niece in the neighbourhood; I thought, indeed, she seemed a little shy on the subject, so I suppose there has been a difference in the family." Amanda made no reply to this speech, and the ladies departed.

The pleasure she first felt on hearing of Lord Mortimer's being in the neighbourhood, subsided on reflecting he was an inmate, probably a friend of those relations who had contributed to the destruction of her mother; might they not infuse some prejudices against her in his bosom, or if they were silent, might not Lady Euphrasia, adorned with every advantage of rank and fortune, have won, or at least soon win, his affections?

She now cheered her drooping spirits, as her residence was still a secret to the Edwins, by concluding chance had informed Lord Mortimer of it, and flattered herself, that to avoid the suspicion which a solitary journey to Ireland might create in Lord Cherbury's mind, he had availed himself of the Marquis's party, and come to try if she was unchanged, and her

father would sanction their attachment ere he avowed it to the Earl.

Whilst fluctuating between hope and fear, Ellen ran into the room, exclaiming, "He is come! he is come! Lord Mortimer has come, he has gone into the study, and one may guess what he and Master are talking about, I think."

Amanda trembled so that she could not stand, she felt as if her destiny depended on this minute.

She continued near an hour in this situation, when the voice of Mortimer struck her ear; she started up and saw him walking down the lane with her father, who left him when he had reached the gate. The chill of disappointment pervaded the heart of Amanda. The dinner bell now summoned her; her father's penetrating eye was instantly struck by her agitation and fallen looks, and he conjectured she knew of the visit he had received; on receiving that visit he wondered not at the strength of her attachment, the noble and ingenuous air of Mortimer had immediately prepossessed Fitzalan in his favour; but he rejoiced that Lord Mortimer had merely come on affairs relative to the castle, and had enquired for his daughter with a coolness, which seemed to declare his love totally subdued: not the smallest hint relative to the letter, in which he had proposed for her, dropt from him, and Fitzalan concluded his affections were transferred to some object, more the favourite of fortune, than his portionless Amanda.

This object he was inclined to believe, was Lady Euphrasia Sutherland, from what Lord Cherbury had said concerning the splendid alliance he had in view for his son, and from Lord Mortimer's accompanying the Rosline family to Ireland.

He felt he had not fortitude to mention these conjectures to Amanda: he rather wished she should imbibe them from her own observation. Dinner passed in silence; when the servant was withdrawn, he resolved to relieve the anxiety which her looks

informed him prest upon her heart, by mentioning Lord Mortimer's visit; he came he told her merely to see the state the Castle was in, and added, "His lordship looked at some of the adjacent grounds, and as he has mentioned what improvements he thought necessary to be made in them, I fancy he will not repeat his visit, nor stay much longer in the kingdom."

In a few minutes after this conversation, Fitzalan repaired to his library; the more he reflected on Lord Mortimer's manners, and what he himself had heard from Lord Cherbury, the more he was convinced Lady Euphrasia Sutherland was not only the object destined for Lord Mortimer, but the one who now possessed his affections: and believed his visit to Castle Carberry had been purposely made to announce the alteration of his sentiments by the coldness of his conduct, and check any hopes which his appearance in the neighbourhood might have created.

He had hesitated about Amanda's accepting the Kilcorbans' invitation, he now determined she should go, imprest with the idea of her being there convinced of the change in Lord Mortimer's sentiments, a conviction he deemed necessary to produce one in her own.

Amanda impatiently longed for this night which she believed would realize her hopes or her fears.

CHAPTER XIX.

A crimson blush her beauteous face o'erspread,
 Varying her cheeks by turns with white and red;
 The driving colours, never at a stay,
 Run here and there, and flush and fade away;
 Delightful change, thus Indian iv'ry shows.
 Which with the bord'ring paint of purple glows
 Or hlies damask'd by the neighbouring rose. *Dryden.*

THE wished for night at length arrived, and Amanda arrayed herself with a fluttering heart; the reflec-

tion of her mirror did not depress her spirits ; hope had increased the brilliancy of her eyes, and given an additional glow to her complexion.

Amanda, on reaching Grangeville, found the avenue full of carriages ; her knees trembled as she ascended the stairs ; she wished for time to compose herself ; but the door opened, her name was announced, and Mrs. Kilcorban came forward to receive her. The room was extremely crowded ; immediately over the entrance was the orchestra, and opposite to it sat the Marchioness and her party. The heart of Amanda beat, if possible, with increased quickness on the approach of Mrs. Kilcorban ; recollecting, however, the scrutinizing eyes of Lord Mortimer, and her imperious relations, were now on her, she almost immediately recovered composure, and with her usual elegance walked up the room. Most of the company were strangers to her, and she heard a general buzz of "who is she?" accompanied with expressions of admiration from the gentlemen, among whom were the officers of a garrison near Grangeville. Confused by the notice she attracted, she hastened to the first vacant seat, which was near the Marchioness ; here her confusion subsided : she looked up, and the first eyes she met were Lord Mortimer's (who leaned on Lady Euphrasia Sutherland's chair) fastened on her face with a scrutinizing eagerness : she blushed, and looking from him, perceived she was an object of critical attention to the Marchioness and Lady Euphrasia ; there was a malignant expression in their countenances, which absolutely shocked her. "Can it be possible," said Lady Euphrasia, replying to a young and elegant officer who stood by her, in a tone of affectation and with an impertinent sneer, "that you think her handsome?" "Handsome!" exclaimed he with warmth, "I think her bewitchingly irresistible."

The Marchioness haughtily frowned, Lady Euphrasia smiled satirically, tossed her head and

played with her fan. The Marchioness beheld Amanda with envy and hatred; notwithstanding her partiality for her daughter she could not avoid seeing her vast inferiority in point of personal charms, to her young relation.

Lady Euphrasia's mind was the counter-part of her mother's; but in figure she resembled her father: her stature was low, her features contracted, and though of the same age as Amanda, their harsh expression made her appear much older.

At the ball she supposed she should have appeared as little less, at least, than a demi-goddess, and she entered the room with all the insolence of conscious rank and affectation of beauty; she could however, see there was a number of pretty women present, and felt disconcerted: the respect however, which she was paid, a little revived her; and having contrived to detain Lord Mortimer by her chair, and Sir Charles Bingley, the young officer already mentioned, who was Colonel of a regiment quartered in an adjacent town: she soon felt her spirits uncommonly exhilarated by the attentions of two of the most elegant men in the room: and like a proud Saltana, in the midst of her slaves, was enjoying the compliment she extorted from them by her prefatory speeches, when the door opened and Amanda, like an angel of light, appeared, to dissolve the mists of vanity and self-importance; Lord Mortimer was silent, but his speaking eyes confessed his feelings. Sir Charles Bingley, who had no secret motive to conceal his, openly avowed his admiration, to which Euphrasia replied, as has been already mentioned.

All the rapture Sir Charles expressed, Lord Mortimer felt, the first emotion of tenderness, however, quickly subsided, on recollecting what her conduct had been—how cruelly she had used him, fled in the very moment of hope and expectation, leaving him a prey to distrust, anxiety and regret: he dreaded some fatal mystery, some improper attachment which nei-

ther she nor her father could avow : for never did he imagine that the scrupulous delicacy of Fitzalan alone had effected their separation. From Tudor-Hall he had repaired to London, restless and unhappy ; soon after his arrival there, the Marquis proposed his accompanying him to Ireland ; this he declined, thinking Lord Cherbury meditated an alliance for him with his family. The Earl expressed regret at his refusal : he said he wished he would join the Marquis's party, as he wanted his opinion relative to the state of Castle Carberry, where a man of integrity then resided, who would have any alterations or repairs he might think necessary, executed in the most eligible manner. He mentioned the name of Fitzalan ; Lord Mortimer was surprised and agitated : he concealed his emotions however, and asked a few questions, and found that he was indeed Amanda's father : she was not mentioned, nor did he dare enquire concerning her ; but he immediately declared, since his father wished it so much, he would accompany the Marquis. This was extremely pleasing to that nobleman, as he and Lord Cherbury had, in reality, agreed upon an union between him and Lady Euphrasia, and meant soon openly to avow their intention. Had Lord Mortimer's heart been disengaged, Lady Euphrasia could never have been his choice ; and if Amanda, in reality, proved herself as amiable as he had reason once to believe her, he considered himself bound, by every tie of honour as well as love, to fulfil the engagements he had entered into with her. He resolved, however, to resist every plea of tenderness in her favour except he was thoroughly convinced she still deserved it ; he went to Castle Carberry purposely to make a display of indifference, and to prevent any ideas being entertained of his having followed her to Ireland ; he deemed himself justifiable in touching her sensibility (if indeed she possessed any for him) by an appearance of coldness and inattention : but determined after a little

retaliation of this kind on her, for the pain she made him endure, to come to an explanation.

The character of a perfect stranger was the one he was to support throughout the evening; but her loveliness, and the gallantry of Sir Charles Bingley, tempted him a thousand times to break through the restraint he had imposed upon himself.

Sir Charles Bingley engaged Amanda for the first set, she was next couple to Lady Euphrasia, and endeavoured therefore to calm her spirits. Lord Mortimer, who was Euphrasia's partner, watched them with jealous attention; his wandering glances were soon noticed by Lady Euphrasia, and her frowns and sarcastic speeches evinced her displeasure at them. He tried to recollect himself, and act as politeness required; she not satisfied with fixing his attention, endeavoured to attract Sir Charles's; she spoke to him across Amanda, but all her efforts were ineffectual. Amanda's hand trembled, as in turning she presented it to Lord Mortimer; but though he extended his, he did not touch it: there was a slight in this, which pierced Amanda's heart. When the dance was finished, Sir Charles led her to a seat near the one Lady Euphrasia and Lord Mortimer occupied; she saw his Lordship's eyes often directed towards her, and her heart fluttered at the pleasing probability of being asked to dance by him. Sir Charles declared he could not leave her, till she had promised him her hand for the third set; and he left her with reluctance. (as the gentlemen were again standing up) to seek a partner. At the same moment Lord Mortimer quitted Lady Euphrasia:— Oh! how the bosom of Amanda throbbed, when she saw him approach and look at her!---he paused:--- a faintness came over her;--he cast another glance on her, and passed on: her eye followed him, and she saw him take out Miss Kilcorban.

Several gentlemen pressed her to dance, but she pleaded fatigue, and sat solitary in a window, appa-

rently regarding the gay assembly, but in reality, too much engrossed by painful thoughts to do so. The dancing over, the company repaired to another room for refreshments. Amanda, absorbed in thought, heeded not their almost total desertion, till young Kilcorban, capering up to her, declared she looked as lonesome as a hermit in his cell, and laughing in her face, turned off with a careless impertinence. His words made Amanda sensible of the singularity of her situation; she arose and immediately went to the other room. Every seat was already occupied; near the door sat Lady Euphrasia and the Miss Kilcorbans; Lord Mortimer leaned on the back of her ladyship's chair, and young Kilcorban occupied one by her side, which he never attempted offering to Amanda; she stood therefore, most unpleasantly by the door. A general titter at her situation prevailed among the Lady Euphrasia's party. Lord Mortimer excepted. "Upon my word," said young Kilcorban, looking at Amanda, "some ladies study attitudes, which would be as well let alone." "For the study of propriety," replied her ladyship. Sir Charles Bingley, occupied in attending the young lady with whom he had danced, observed not Amanda till this moment; he instantly flew to her: "Alone, and standing?" said he, "Kilcorban," he continued, "I must suppose you did not see Miss Fitzalan, or your seat would not have been kept," then catching him by the arm, he raised him nimbly from his chair, and directly carried it to Amanda; and having procured her refreshments, seated himself at her feet, exclaiming, "this is my throne, let kings come and bow to it." He detested the Marchioness and her daughter for their rancorous envy, as much as he despised the Kilcorbans for their mean insolence. The Marchioness told him a long tale of the shocking conduct of Amanda's parents, whose ill qualities she declared her looks announced her to possess, and endeavoured to depreciate her in his favour; but that was impossible.

“Lord!” said Lady Euphrasia, rising as she spoke, “let me pass, this scene is sickening.” The company were now returning to the ball-room, and Sir Charles took Amanda’s hand to lead her after them. At that moment Lord Mortimer approached;—Amanda paused as if to adjust her dress; he passed on to a very beautiful girl, whom he immediately engaged.

When the set with Sir Charles was finished, she would have left the house directly, had her servant been there. She declared her resolution of dancing no more, and Sir Charles having avowed the same, they repaired to the card-table, as being the least crowded. Lady Greystock was playing with the Marchioness: she beckoned Amanda to her, having had no opportunity of speaking to her before. The Marquis examined her through his spectacles—the Marchioness frowned and declared “she would take care in future to avoid parties subject to such disagreeable intruders.” This speech was too pointed not to be remarked; and Amanda was obliged to move hastily from the table. Sir Charles followed her. “Cursed malignity,” cried he, trying to screen her from observation, while tears trickled down her cheeks. “It is cruel, it is shocking,” said Amanda, “to suffer enmity to outlive the object who excited it; the original of this picture,” and she looked at her mother’s, “merited not such conduct.” Sir Charles gazed on it; it was wet with Amanda’s tears, he wiped them off and pressing the handkerchief to his lips, put it in his bosom.

At this instant Lord Mortimer appeared, he had been for some time an unnoticed observer of this tête-a-tête. As soon as he perceived he had attracted their regard, he quitted the room.

“His Lordship is like a troubled spirit to-night, wandering to and fro,” said Sir Charles, “I really believe every thing is not quite right between him and Lady Euphrasia.” “Something then,” cried

Amanda, "is in agitation between him and her ladyship." "So says the world," replied Sir Charles, "but to give my real opinion, I think him quite uninterested about her Ladyship: I will not say so much as to all the ladies present; I really imagined several times to-night, from his glances at you, he was on the point of requesting an introduction which would not have pleased me perfectly. Mortimer possesses more graces than those which merely meet the eye, and is a rival I should by no means like to have."

Amanda, confused by this discourse, endeavoured to change it, and at last succeeded: they conversed pleasantly together till they went to supper, when Sir Charles still continued his attention. Lord Mortimer was, or at least appeared to be, entirely engrossed with Lady Euphrasia, who from time to time tittered with the Miss Kilcorbans, and looked satirically at Amanda. On quitting the supper-room, she found her servant in the hall, and immediately ordered the carriage. Sir Charles who held her hand requested her to stay a little longer, as the scene, so lately delightful, in losing her, would lose all its charms; he entreated and obtained permission to wait on her next morning.

How different was now the appearance of Amanda, to what it had been at her departure! pale, trembling and languid, her father received her into his arms; and he instantly guessed the cause of her dejection. His heart mourned for the pangs inflicted on his child's. When she beheld her father gazing on her with mingled woe and tenderness, she tried to recruit her spirits, and after relating a few particulars of the ball, answered the minute enquiries he made relative to the Marchioness and Lady Euphrasia. He appeared unutterably affected on hearing it. "Merciful power," exclaimed he, "what dispositions!—but you are too lovely, too like your mother, my Amanda, in every perfection, to escape

their malice: oh may it never injure you as it did her:—may that Providence, whose protection I daily implore for the sweet child of my love, render every wish, every scheme which may be formed against her, abortive.”

Amanda retired to her chamber, inexpressibly affected by the language of her father. “Yes,” cried she, her heart swelling with pity and gratitude to him, “my sorrow in future shall be concealed to avoid exciting his:—the pain inflicted by thy inconstancy, Mortimer, shall be hid in the recesses of my heart, and never shall the peace of my father be disturbed by knowing the loss of mine.”

CHAPTER XX.

Love reigns a very tyrant in my heart,
 Attended on his throne by all his guard
 Of furious wishes, and nice suspicions. *Otway.*

THE next morning brought Sir Charles Bingley. Fitzalan was out, but Amanda received him in her dressing-room. He told her he was on the point of embarking for England, having received letters that morning which recalled him there; and requested he might not be entirely forgotten during his absence.

Day after day elapsed, and no Mortimer appeared. Amanda, indeed heard frequently of him, and always as the admired of Lady Euphrasia; the idea of their union haunted her imagination, and imbittered every moment. The Kilcorbans seemed to have given her up entirely; Lady Greystock was the only one of the family who continued to pay her any attention.

About three weeks after the ball, as she sat at work one morning in her dressing-room, she heard the door softly open behind her; she supposed it to be Ellen: but finding no one advance, she turned round and perceived not Ellen indeed, but Lord Mortimer himself.—She started from her chair, and had neither power to speak nor move.

“I fear I have surprised and alarmed you,” said Lord Mortimer. “I ask pardon for my intrusion, but I was informed I should find Mr. Fitzalan here.”

“He is in the study, my Lord,” replied Amanda, coolly, and with restored composure, “I will inform him your Lordship wishes to see him.”

“No,” exclaimed he, “my business is not so urgent as to require my seeing him immediately.” He reseated Amanda, and drew a chair near her.

“This room,” said he, softly sighing, “I well remember: it was the favourite resort of one of the most amiable of women, and I think,” continued he, gazing on Amanda with the softest tenderness, “it is still occupied by a kindred spirit.”

Amanda’s eyes were instantly bent to the ground; with such an accent as this, Lord Mortimer was wont to address her at Tudor Hall, but she had now reason to think it only assumed, for the purpose of discovering whether she yet retained any sensibility for him. Had he not treated her with the most pointed neglect? Was he not the declared admirer of lady Euphrasia? Had he not confessed, on entering the room, he came to seek not her, but her father? These ideas determined her to continue no longer with him: she therefore arose, and said she would acquaint her father his lordship waited for him.

“Cold, insensible Amanda,” cried he, snatching her hand, “Is it thus you leave me? When we parted in Wales, I could not have believed we should ever have had such a meeting as this.”

“Perhaps not, my Lord,” replied she, somewhat haughtily, “but we have both thought more prudently since that period.”

“Then why,” said he, “did not prudence teach you to shun a conduct which could create suspicion?”

“Suspicion,” repeated Amanda, with a kind of horror in her look, “is it possible, my Lord, you never conceived the reason of my departure?”

“Never, I solemnly assure you: nor shall I be

happy till I know it." He paused, as if for a reply; but whilst Amanda stood silent and trembling, she heard her father's voice, as he ascended the stairs. This instantly restored hers, "I must go, my Lord," cried she. "Promise then to meet me," he said, "this evening at St. Catherine's, by seven, or I will not let you go." "I do promise," said Amanda. Lord Mortimer released her hand and she retired just time enough to avoid her father.

His lordship was scarcely gone, ere Lady Greystock made her appearance. Amanda supposed, as usual, she only came to pay a flying visit; how great then were her mortification and surprise, when she told her she was come to spend a day with her! Amanda tried to derive comfort from the hope that she would depart early in the evening, but when six o'clock struck, she manifested no inclination to move. Amanda was in agony, Lady Greystock pulling out her knitting, requested Amanda to read to her till tea-time. Amanda took up a book, but was so confused, she scarcely knew what or how she read; and when the clock struck seven, her feelings could no longer be repressed. "Good heaven," cried she, dropping the book, and starting up, "this is too much." "Bless me, my dear," said Lady Greystock, "what is the matter?" "Only a slight heart-ache, madam," answered Amanda, continuing to walk about the room.

Her busy fancy represented Lord Mortimer, now impatiently waiting for her—thinking in every sound which echoed among the desolate ruins of St. Catherine's, he heard her footsteps, his soul melting at the idea of a reconciliation. What could he infer from her not keeping an appointment so ardently desired, so solemnly promised? perhaps, piqued at her breaking her engagement, he would not afford her an opportunity of accounting for it, and at last, perhaps, expel her from his heart. Fitzalan soon after entered the room, and tea was made: when over, Lady Greystock declared they were a snug party for three-

handed whist. Amanda's extreme dejection was noticed both by Fitzalan and her ladyship: the latter imputed it to regret, at not being permitted by her father to accept an invitation for a ball the ensuing evening.

"Don't fret about it, my dear," said she, "'tis not by frequenting balls and public-places, a girl always stands the best chance of being provided for: I, for my part, have been married three times, yet never made a conquest of any one of my husbands at a public-place; no, it was the privacy of my life partly obtained for me my good fortune." Fitzalan and Amanda laughed. "I shall never be dissatisfied with staying at home," said the latter, "though without either expecting or desiring to have my retirement recompensed as Your Ladyship's was." "One prize will satisfy you, then!" said Fitzalan. "Ah!" cried Lady Greystock, "it is Lady Euphrasia Sutherland will obtain the capital one; I don't know where such another young man as Lord Mortimer is to be found; I dare say Lady Euphrasia will have changed her title before this time next year."

Fitzalan glanced at Amanda; her face was deadly pale. At last the carriage of Grangeville arrived, and broke up a party Amanda could not much longer have supported. Her father perceived the painful efforts she made to conceal her distresses; he pitied her from his soul, and pretending to think she was only indisposed, entreated her to retire to her chamber. Amanda gladly complied.

She passed a restless night, nor was her morning more composed; every step she heard, she started, in expectation of instantly seeing Lord Mortimer. After dinner she walked out alone, and took the road to St. Catherine's. When she reached the ruins, she felt fatigued, and sat down to rest herself. She heard a rustling behind her, and turning, perceived sister Mary. "You are welcome," cried the good natured nun, affectionately kissing her, "But, Oh, Jesu," she

continued, "you do indeed look ill, I must go and get you a cordial from our Prioress."

Amanda caught her gown as she was running away, and assured her she was better.

"Well then," said she, "I must tell you an odd thing which happened here last night; I came out to walk about the ruins between the lights, and had just turned the cloisters, when I heard a quick step pacing after me; well, supposing it to be one of the sisters, I walked slowly, but guess my surprise, when I was overtaken by one of the finest and most beautiful young men I ever beheld. Lord, how he did start when he saw me: he looked quite wild, and flew off muttering something to himself. Well, I thought this strange, and was hastening to the convent, when he appeared again, coming from under that broken arch, and he bowed and smiled so sweetly, and begged my pardon for the alarm he had given me; and then he blushed and strove to hide his confusion, while he asked me if I had seen ere a young lady about the ruins that evening. 'Why, my dear Sir,' says I, 'I have been about this place the whole evening, and there has been neither man, woman, nor child, but you and myself: so the young lady has changed her mind.'---'So I suppose,' said he, and looked so pale, and so melancholy. I could not help thinking it was a sweetheart he had been seeking; so by way of giving him a bit of comfort, 'Sir,' says I, 'if you will leave any marks of the young lady you were seeking, with me, I will watch here myself a little longer, and if she comes, I will tell her how uneasy you were at not finding her, and be sure to dispatch her after you.' 'No, he thanked me,' he said, 'but it was of very little consequence his not meeting her, or indeed, whether he ever met her again, and went away.'" "Did he?" said Amanda. "Bless me," said the nun, "you are worse instead of better."

Amanda acknowledged she was, and rising re-

requested she would excuse her not paying her compliments that evening to the nunnery.

Scarcely had she regained the road, ere a coach and six, preceded and followed by a number of attendants, approached with such quickness, that she was obliged to step aside to avoid it; looking in at the window, as it passed, she saw Lord Mortimer and Lady Euphrasia seated in it, opposite to each other; she saw they both perceived her, and that Lady Euphrasia laughed, and put her head forward to stare impertinently at her. The night passed heavily away; the idea of Lord Mortimer devoting all his attention to Lady Euphrasia could not be driven from her mind.

The next morning, the first object she saw on going to the window, was a large frigate lying at anchor near the Castle. Ellen entered her chamber and sighing heavily, as she always did at the sight of a ship, said "she wished it contained her wandering sailor." Amanda indulged a hope that Lord Mortimer would appear in the course of the day, but she was disappointed. Scarcely had Amanda retired to her chamber for the night, ere Ellen entered.

"I have seen him," cried she, hastily, "Oh! madam, I have seen poor Chip himself, and he is as kind and true-hearted as ever. I went this evening to see old Norah, to whom you sent the linen, and I met poor Chip, he hopes soon to get his discharge, and then"—"You are to be married," said Amanda interpreting the blushes and hesitation of Ellen. "Yes inatam; poor fellow, he sails to-morrow night; the ship is on the Irish station, and they are to coast it to Dublin."

The next evening, at twilight, Amanda went down to the beach with her father, to see the fishermen draw their seines on shore. Whilst Fitzalan conversed with them, Amanda seated herself on a low rock: she was suddenly roused by voices behind her. She started from her seat, for in one of them

she imagined she distinguished the accents of Lord Mortimer: nor was she mistaken; he was descending a winding path near her, accompanied by a naval officer. To pass without seeing her was impossible; and as he approached her, he stopt, apparently hesitating whether or no he should address her. In a few minutes his hesitation ended with waving his handkerchief, as if to bid her adieu, whilst he proceeded to a small boat, which on receiving him and his companion, rowed to the frigate. Amanda trembled. Ellen had informed her the frigate was to sail that night, and what could induce Lord Mortimer to visit it at such an hour, except an intention of departing in it?

As soon as she returned to the Castle, she demanded of Ellen if Chip's intelligence was true.

"Alas! yes," replied Ellen, weeping violently, "and I know the reason you inquire. You saw Lord Mortimer going to the ship: I saw him myself as I stood on the beach talking to poor Chip, who was one of the sailors who came in the boat for his lordship and the captain; and to be sure the sight left my eyes when I saw my lord departing because I knew he was going away in anger, at the treatment he supposes he received from you."

"From me?" exclaimed Amanda.

"Oh, you will never forgive me," sobbed Ellen. "Last night as I was going to Norah's I overtook Lord Mortimer: 'My good girl how are you?' said he, 'and pray is Miss Fitzalan at home and disengaged?' I told him you was; and Cot knows my Lord,' says I, 'and melancholy enough.' 'Well, hasten home,' cried he, 'and tell her she will greatly oblige me by meeting me immediately at the rocks beyond the Castle;' I promised him I would, and he forced five guineas into my hand, charging me not to forget: put as I was so near Norah's I thought I might just step in, and when I left her, I met poor Chip—"

“ Oh, Ellen,” cried Amanda, “ how could you serve me so ? ”

Ellen’s efforts at consolation were not successful, and Amanda dismissed her, that unnoticed, she might indulge the tears which flowed at the idea of a long, perhaps, a lasting separation from Lord Mortimer; offended, justly offended, as she supposed with her, the probability was, she would be banished from his thoughts, and thus might his heart soon be qualified for making another choice. She walked to the window, and saw the ship already under weigh; her eyes followed it, till it appeared like a speck.

“ He is gone,” said she, “ he is gone, and if ever I meet him again, it will probably be as the husband of Lady Euphrasia.”

CHAPTER XXI.

Think’st thou I’ll make a life of jealousy,
To follow still the changes of the moon
With fresh surmises? No, to be once in doubt,
Is to be resolved.— But yet
I’ll see before I doubt: when I doubt, prove:
And on the proof there is no more but this,
Away at once with love or jealousy. *Shakespeare.*

LORD Mortimer had, in reality, departed with sentiments very unfavourable to Amanda: he had waited impatiently at St. Catherine’s, in the fond expectation of having all his doubts removed, by a candid explanation of the motives which caused her precipitate journey from Wales: but when the appointed hour passed, and no Amanda appeared, almost distracted, he ventured to enquire concerning her, from sister Mary. “ She fears to come then,” exclaimed he, quitting the desolate spot, long after the friendly nun had retired to the Convent. “ She fears to come because she cannot satisfy my doubts; the mystery which separated us will not be explained, and it is in vain to think we shall ever meet, as I once flattered myself we should.”

Most unwillingly he accompanied the Marchioness and Lady Euphrasia, the ensuing day to a splendid entertainment given purposely for them in the neighbourhood. The unexpected sight of Amanda as she stood on a little elevated bank, to avoid the carriage, caused a sudden emotion of surprise and delight in his bosom, and made him resolve to seek another opportunity of demanding an explanation from her.

He wandered near the castle the next evening, in the hopes of meeting Amanda: his disappointment was diminished by seeing Ellen, who he was confident, would be faithful to the message entrusted to her, with this confidence he hastened to the rock. An hour elapsed: it was not Ellen, but Amanda he doubted. He traversed the beach in an agony of impatience and anxiety. She avoided him designedly it was evident, and his wounded pride revolted from ever seeking another interview.

The next morning he accompanied the Marquis to the frigate, where he was delighted to find in the commander an old friend of his, Captain Somerville, and promised to accompany him in his intended cruise: for he was completely tired of the Rosline family. As he descended to the boat, the sight of Amanda shook his resolution: an ardent wish sprung in his heart to address her, but it was instantly suppressed, by reflecting how premeditatedly she had avoided him: pride therefore prompted him to pass her in silence.

The family at Ulster-Lodge were both mortified and disappointed by his departure: though he, perceiving their displeasure, promised to await their arrival in Dublin. His departure seemed a tacit intimation that he was not so much attached to Lady Euphrasia as they wished him to be: a suspicion of this nature had, indeed, for some time pervaded their minds, and also that his affections were elsewhere placed: they had reason to believe that the person who possessed them dwelt in the vicinity of the Lodge, from the great alteration which took place in his

manners, immediately after his arrival at it. In the hopes of discovering who this was, they watched him at all the parties he frequented with them, but soon found it was not the present, but absent objects had the power of exciting emotions in him. At the name of Amanda Fitzalan or her father, they observed him colour: to her, therefore, they feared he was attached, and supposed the attachment had commenced at the Kilcorbans' ball. The most unbounded rage took possession of their souls. They knew that ambition was the leading passion of Lord Cherbury's soul: anxious for an alliance between his family and theirs, they knew he would ill brook any obstacle which should be thrown in the way of its completion, and therefore resolved, if Lord Mortimer, at their next meeting appeared averse to the wishes of his father, to acquaint the Earl, and to represent Fitzalan and his daughter, as aiding and abetting each other, to entangle the affections of Lord Mortimer, and draw him into a marriage, a scheme which, to a man of the world, like Lord Cherbury, would appear so very probable as to gain implicit credit. This they knew would induce him to withdraw his favour from Fitzalan, and the father and child be again sunk in indigent obscurity. Though not quite assured their suspicions were well founded, they would never have hesitated communicating them as such to Lord Cherbury: but for their own satisfaction they wished to know what reasons they had to entertain them. Lady Greystock was the only person they observed on a footing of intimacy with Amanda, and through her means hoped to make the desired discovery. They, therefore, began to unbend from their haughtiness, and make overtures for an intimacy, which she received with delight. At length after an injunction of secrecy, the Marchioness communicated to her her fears relative to Lord Mortimer and Amanda, which, she pretended regard for the one, and pity for the other, had excited, as an attachment either of an

honourable or dishonourable nature, she knew Lord Cherbury would never pardon. Lady Greystock was not to be imposed on; she perceived it was not pity for Amanda, but envy and jealousy which had excited the fears of the Marchioness. If Lord Mortimer were attached to Amanda, she was convinced it was an attachment of the purest nature. She, however, affected to enter into all the alarms of the Marchioness, and promised all in her power should be done for discovering what attachment subsisted between his Lordship and Miss Fitzalan. For this purpose she often spent whole days at Castle Carberry, in the most familiar manner with Amanda, and endeavoured by various methods, to beguile her of the secrets of her heart.

Delicacy sealed the lips of Amanda, and guarded her secret: but though she could command her words, she could not her feelings; she blushed whenever Lord Mortimer was mentioned; looked shocked if a union between him and Lady Euphrasia was hinted at; and smiled, if a probability was suggested of its never taking place. Lady Greystock at last deemed herself authorized to inform the Marchioness, that she was sure something had passed between Lord Mortimer and Amanda, though what, she could not discover, from the circumspection of the latter. The Marchioness was enraged, and more determined than ever, on involving Amanda in destruction, if Lord Mortimer hesitated a moment in obeying the wishes of his father, by uniting himself to Lady Euphrasia.

CHAPTER XXII.

A song, a flower, a name, at once restore
 Those long connected scenes when first they moved
 Th' attention. *Akenside.*

A MONTH after the departure of Lord Mortimer the Rosline family left Ulster Lodge. Amanda's usual

avocations no longer yielded her delight; every idea, every occupation was embittered by the reflection of being lessened in Lord Mortimer's estimation. Her health declined with her peace, and again Fitzalan had the anguish of seeing sorrow nipping his lovely blossom. He was not ignorant of the cause of her dejection, but he would not shock her feelings by hinting it.

At this period of distress, Lady Greystock, who alone continued her visits, made a proposal which Fitzalan eagerly embraced; this was to take Amanda to London with her, whither she was obliged to go directly, about a law-suit between her and the nephew of her late husband. The nephew's name was Rushbrook, whom she had caused to be disenherited by making sir Geoffry Greystock sign a will, drawn up by creatures of her own, whilst in a state of insensibility, almost immediately before he expired.

Amanda, on the first proposal of accompanying her, warmly opposed it; but Fitzalan at length prevailed upon her to consent. As they went by way of Holyhead, he determined on sending Ellen to her parents, till Amanda returned from England, which pleased Ellen exceedingly, as she longed to see her family, and tell them particulars about Chip.

They arrived the third day after their departure in Dublin, and two days after embarked for England. They slept the first night at Holyhead, and the next morning pursued their journey.

They stopped for the night, about five o'clock, at an inn about a mile from Tudor-Hall, after dinner Amanda informed Lady Greystock she wished to accompany Ellen to her parents.

They set out unattended, this they did by Amanda's desire, who wished, unobserved, to pursue a walk in which she promised herself a melancholy indulgence, from reviewing the well known scenes endeared by tender recollections.

Leaning on Ellen's arm, she proceeded slowly in

her walk; the evening was delightful; Amanda gazed on the high woods of Tudor-Hall with emotion, but when she came to the gate which Lord Mortimer had opened for her departure at their first interview, she stopped, leaned upon it, and wept. The evergreens, with which the woods abounded, prevented their wearing the desolate appearance of winter. "When the glow of vegetation again revives," said she to herself, "when the blossom and flowers again spread their spangled foliage to the sun, where, alas, will Amanda be? far distant, in all probability, from these delightful scenes, perhaps neglected and forgotten by their master."

Ellen besought Amanda to hasten to the cottage. The surprise and joy of her parents was unbounded, their first question was, "would not Amanda stay with them?" and her answer filled them with disappointment.

"Alack a tay," said her nurse, "are you going away, when I thought you came to stay among us, and then, perhaps my lord would have come, and then there would have been such a happy meeting; why, I verily thought he would have gone distracted when he found you had gone away: and to be sure I did pity him, and should have made no scruple to tell him where you were, had I known it myself, which he suspected, for he offered me a sight of money if I would discover it. Then there is parson Howel"---

"Well," said Amanda, endeavouring to appear cheerful, "we may all yet have a happy meeting."

The time allotted for her walk being already exceeded, she feared Lady Greystock would be offended; she therefore bid them farewell, and leaning on old Edwin's arm, returned to the inn. And soon after tea they retired to rest. Amanda rose early, and went down to the court to walk about till her ladyship was ready, where the first object she perceived was Howel, who exclaimed,

“You are surprised, but I trust not displeased, I have been watching here, since the first dawn of day.”

“I am sorry,” said Amanda, gravely, “your time was so ill employed.”

“How coldly you speak,” cried he, “ah! could you read my heart, you would see so little presumption in it, that you would pity, though you could not relieve its feelings. Every spot you loved, I have haunted, nor has your mother’s grave wanted its vernal offering.”

Howel’s plaintive voice affected Amanda, but, saying she was happy to see him, she tried to disengage her hand.

“Surely,” said he, still retaining it a few minutes, “you might grant me without reluctance---you who are going to meet the favoured”---

Amanda anticipated the name he was about uttering, and her confusion redoubled. She turned to see whether anyone was observing them, and perceived Lady Greystock leaning from a window exactly over their heads, she smiled significantly at Amanda, and the carriage being ready, came down. Howel now relinquished Amanda’s hand; he saw she looked displeased; and expressed such sorrow, that she could not avoid according him her pardon. He handed her and Lady Greystock into the carriage, which drove off.

“Upon my word, a pretty smart young fellow,” said Lady Greystock, “I suppose you have been a resident in this part of the country before, from your seeming to know this tender swain so well.”

“Your ladyship has heard, I believe,” replied Amanda, blushing, “that Ellen’s mother nursed me?” “Yes, my dear,” replied her ladyship, but I fancy your acquaintance has been renewed since infancy. That is a fine domain,” continued she, pursuing Amanda’s eyes as they looked at Tudor-Hall, “I presume you have visited it, and know its owner?”

Amanda could not assert a falsehood; and there-

fore not only confessed it being the estate of Lord Mortimer, but her own residence near it, the preceding summer. Her ladyship immediately conjectured it was then the attachment between her and Lord Mortimer had commenced; and she flattered herself with thinking she had discovered enough to satisfy the Marchioness, if she (as she feared she would) expressed any displeasure at seeing Amanda her companion: she intended saying that Fitzalan had absolutely forced her under her protection.

They arrived the third day at Pall Mall, where her agent had taken lodgings for them.

The day after her arrival, Lady Greystock sent a card of inquiry to the Rosline family. The next morning she received a visit from them. Amanda was sitting in the window when the carriage drove up to the door, and she instantly left the room. Lady Greystock soon informed them of Amanda's having accompanied her to London; and they, as she expected, expressed displeasure at it. As she had settled in her mind, she therefore told them, "that Fitzalan had urged her to take his daughter under her care, which," she added, with a significant look, "she believed he had good reasons for doing." She then related all she suspected relative to the attachment between Lord Mortimer and Amanda having commenced the preceding summer in Wales.

The Marchioness and Lady Euphrasia instantly conjectured she was sent to London for the purpose of having it completed by a marriage. This, however, they determined to prevent. Though the Marchioness abhorred the idea of noticing her, yet she was tempted now to do so, from the idea that it would better enable her to watch her actions. This idea she communicated to Lady Euphrasia, who approving it, she told Lady Greystock, "as Miss Fitzalan was her guest, she would permit her to be introduced to them." Amanda was accordingly sent for. The Marchioness, half rising, with a coldness she could

not conquer, said, "Whenever Lady Greystock honoured her with a visit, she would be happy to see Miss Fitzalan with her." Lady Euphrasia only noticed her by a slight bow. The unembarrassed elegance of Amanda's air and manner, surprised and mortified them; they were provoked to see in her conscious dignity, instead of trembling diffidence. The Marchioness withdrew soon after her entrance, unable longer to restrain the malignant passions which envy had excited.

Both she and Lady Euphrasia were convinced that to communicate their suspicions at present to Lord Cherbury, about her and his son, would not answer the end proposed; the point therefore was, by some deep-laid scheme to ruin Amanda in Mortimer's estimation.

The blow at her fond hopes, they resolved should be followed by one against the peace of Fitzalan, on whom they knew, whenever they pleased, they could draw the resentment of Lord Cherbury. The haughty soul of Lady Euphrasia would never have permitted her to think of accepting Lord Mortimer (after his neglect to her) but by the opportunity she should have by such an acceptance of triumphing over Amanda.

Lord Cherbury had never yet spoken explicitly to his son concerning the union he projected for him, and to avoid a disagreeable argument with a son he not only loved, but respected; he sought rather, by indirect means, to involve him in an entanglement with the Rosline family, than to come to an open explanation with him. For this purpose he contrived parties as often as possible with them in public: where, by Lord Mortimer's being seen with Lady Euphrasia, reports might be raised of an intended alliance between them: these reports would, he trusted, on reaching Lord Mortimer, lead to a discussion of the affair: and then he meant to say, as Lord Mortimer had partly contributed to raise them

himself by his attendance on Lady Euphrasia, he could not possibly, with honour, recede from realizing them: yet often did his lordship fear his scheme would prove abortive: for he well knew the cool judgment and keen penetration of his son; this fear always inspired him with horror, for he had a motive for desiring the union he durst not avow.

Lord Mortimer quickly indeed discerned what his father's views were, in promoting his attendance on Lady Euphrasia: he therefore avoided her society as much as possible: he had always disliked her, but latterly that dislike was converted into hatred, from the malevolence of her conduct towards Amanda.

In the evening Lady Greystock and Amanda received cards for dinner the next day at the Marquis of Rosline's. Amanda made no objection to this invitation: for had she done so, she would either be a restraint on Lady Greystock, or left to total solitude; and the idea stole upon her mind, that she should lose a chance of seeing Lord Mortimer, who, she supposed, a frequent guest at the Marquis'.

About six they reached Portman-Square, and found a large party assembled. After Amanda was introduced to the Marquis, not indeed as a near relation, but as an utter stranger, a gentleman stepped up to the Marchioness, and addressing her in a low voice, was immediately presented by her to Amanda, as the Earl of Cherbury.

"My dear young lady," said he, "allow me to express the pleasure I feel, at seeing the daughter of my worthy friend Mr. Fitzalan; allow me also to increase that pleasure," continued he, taking her hand, "by presenting Miss Fitzalan to Lady Araminta Dormer, and desiring their friendship for each other."

Surprised, confused, yet delighted, the heart of Amanda heaved with emotion. His lordship left her seated by his daughter, who expressed her pleasure at being introduced to her.

The conduct of Lord Cherbury had drawn all eyes

upon Amanda: and the Marchioness and Lady Euphrasia regarded her with peculiar malignancy.

“Pray who is this little country Miss?” exclaimed Miss Malcolm, (who was a relation of the Marquis, and from being extremely ugly, extremely rich and ill-natured, was an immense favourite of Euphrasia’s.)

“Some kind of far-off relation of my mother’s,” replied Lady Euphrasia, “who that old dowager, Lady Greystock, pick’d up in the wilds of Ireland, and has absolutely forced upon our notice. I dare say her silly old father has exhausted all his ways and means in trying to render her decent, comforting himself, no doubt, with the hope of her entrapping some young fool of quality, who may supply his wants as well as hers.”

“Aye, I suppose all the stock on the farm was sold to dress her out,” cried Freelove, a little trifling fop, who leaned on her ladyship’s chair. He was a ward of Lord Cherbury’s, and his fortune considerable, but nature had not been quite as bounteous to him as the blind goddess.

Amanda, in conversing with Lady Araminta, experienced the purest pleasure. Her ladyship was the “softened image” of Lord Mortimer: and Amanda gazed and listened with rapture. On her confusion abating, her eye had wandered round the room, in quest of his lordship, but he was not in it: yet the pang of disappointment was softened to Amanda, by his absence intimating that he was not anxious for Lady Euphrasia’s society.

In the evening, Lady Euphrasia, in pursuance of a plan laid against Amanda, led the way to the music-room, attended by a large party; as Freelove had intimated to some of the beaux and belles, her ladyship and he were going to quiz an ignorant Irish country girl. Lady Euphrasia sat down to the harpsichord, that she might have a better pretext for asking Amanda to play. Freelove seated himself by

the latter, and began a conversation, which he thought would effectually embarrass her: but it had quite a contrary effect, rendering him so extremely ridiculous, as to excite an universal laugh at his expense.

Lady Euphrasia now rising, requested Amanda to play: saying, with an ironical air, "her performance (which indeed was shocking) would make hers appear to amazing advantage. I suppose," continued her ladyship, "these songs," presenting some trifling ones, "will answer you better than the Italian ones before you."

Amanda made no reply, but turned over the leaves of the book to a lesson much more difficult than that Lady Euphrasia had played. Her touch at first was tremulous and weak, but gradually her style became so masterly and elegant, as to excite universal admiration. When the lesson was concluded, some gentlemen entreated her to sing. She chose a plaintive Italian air, and the exquisite taste and sweetness with which she sung, equally astonished and delighted. The gentlemen gathered round Lady Euphrasia, to enquire who the beautiful stranger was, and she gave them pretty much the same account she had already done to Miss Malcolm.

The rage and disappointment of that young lady and her ladyship, could scarcely be concealed.

The fair object of their disquietude gladly accompanied Lady Araminta into another room; several gentlemen followed, and crowded about the chair. The Marchioness, however, soon relieved her from the troublesome assiduities of the beaux, by placing them at card-tables, flattering herself Amanda would be vexed in losing their attention.

In the course of conversation, Lady Araminta mentioned Ireland; "her brother," she added, "had almost made her promise to visit Castle Carberry with him the ensuing summer.—You have seen Lord Mortimer to be sure," continued her ladyship.

"Yes, madam," faltered Amanda, while her face

was overspread with a crimson hue. Her ladyship was too penetrating not to perceive her confusion, and it gave rise to a conjecture of something more than a slight acquaintance being between his lordship and Amanda. She loved her brother with the truest tenderness, and secretly believed he was attached in Ireland, from the melancholy he had betrayed on his returning from there. Lady Araminta already felt for her unspeakable tenderness, and felt that if oppressed with sorrow, Amanda Fitzalan, above all other beings, was the one she would select to give her consolation. The confusion she betrayed at the mention of Mortimer, made her ladyship suspect she was the cause of his dejection.

Lord Cherbury, at this moment of embarrassment to Amanda, approached; he said, he was come to request her to meet the Marquis's family at his house the next day at dinner, and begged her to excuse so unceremonious an invitation, which he was induced to make on Lady Araminta's account, who was obliged to leave town the day after next.

Amanda bowed. This invitation was more pleasing than one of form would have been; it seemed to indicate a friendship, and a desire to have the friendship between her and his daughter cultivated: it gave her also a hope of seeing Lord Mortimer.

Lady Greystock, at length rose to depart; Amanda received an affectionate adieu from Lady Araminta and Lord Cherbury attended them to their carriage.

Amanda retired to her chamber, with a hope, derived from the attention of Lord Cherbury, and the tenderness of Lady Araminta, that the fond wishes of her heart might yet be realized; wishes, again believed from hearing of Lord Mortimer's dejection, (which his sister had touched upon) and from his absenting himself from the Marquis', were not uncongenial to those he himself entertained. She sat down to acquaint her father with the particulars of the day she had passed.

The next day, about four o'clock, Amanda began the labours of the toilette with a beating heart; nor were its quick pulsations decreased on entering Lady Greystock's carriage, which in a few minutes conveyed her to Lord Cherbury's house in St. James' Square. She followed her ladyship with tottering steps, and the first object she saw on entering the drawing-room, was Lord Mortimer, standing near the door.

CHAPTER XXIII.

Begone my cares, I give you to the winds. *Rowe.*

THE emotions which agitated Amanda, were not diminished, when Lord Cherbury, taking her trembling hand, said:

"Mortimer, I presume you have already seen Miss Fitzalan in Ireland."

"I have, my Lord," cried Mortimer, bowing and at the same time, approaching to pay his compliments.

Every eye in the room, except Lord Cherbury's and Freelove's, was now turned upon his lordship and Amanda, and thought in the expressive countenances of both, enough could be read to confirm their suspicions of a mutual attachment between them.

Amanda when seated, endeavoured to recover her confusion. Miss Malcolm, to prevent Lord Mortimer's taking a seat by her, which she thought she perceived him inclined to do, beckoned him to her, and contrived to engage him in trifling chat, till dinner.

The unexpected arrival of Amanda in London astonished and, notwithstanding his resentment, delighted him. His sister, when they were alone in the morning, had mentioned her with all the fervency of praise. Since his return from Ireland, tortured with

incessant regret for his departure, he would have returned immediately, but at this period found it impossible to do so, without exciting inquiries from Lord Cherbury, which at present he did not choose to answer. He now almost believed it the peculiar interposition of Providence which had brought Amanda to town, thus affording him another opportunity of having his anxiety relieved, and the chief obstacle, perhaps to his, and he flattered himself also to her happiness removed.

Amanda looked thinner and paler than when he had seen her in Ireland, yet, if possible, more interesting from these circumstances. Scarcely could he restrain the rapture he felt, on seeing her, within necessary bounds: and he sighed for the period of explanation, which he trusted, would also be that of reconciliation.

The gentlemen joined the ladies about tea-time, and Lady Euphrasia proposed a party to the Pantheon; this was immediately agreed to. Amanda was delighted at the proposal, as it promised to give Lord Mortimer an opportunity of addressing her, as she saw he wished, but vainly attempted at home.

Neither Lady Euphrasia, nor Miss Malcolm could bear the idea of Lord Mortimer and Amanda going in the same carriage. Lady Euphrasia, therefore, with sudden eagerness, declared she and Miss Malcolm would resign their seats in the Marchioness' carriage to Miss Fitzalan and Freelove, for the pleasure of accompanying Lady Araminta in hers. The Marchioness seconded her daughter's proposal, to the regret of Amanda, and the visible chagrin of Lord Mortimer. The Marchioness and Lady Greystock chatted together, and Freelove hummed a song as if for the purpose of mortifying Amanda by his inattention. When the carriage stopt, he assisted the former ladies out; but as if forgetting such a being as Amanda existed, he went on with them. She was descending the steps, when Lord Mortimer prest for-

ward, and snatching her hand, softly exclaimed, "We have met again, and neither envy nor malice shall again separate us." Amanda's hand trembled in his, and she felt in that moment, recompensed for her former disappointment. Lady Euphrasia entered the room with a temper unfitted for enjoyment: she was convinced the whole soul of Mortimer was devoted to Amanda.

From the moment he entered the carriage, till he quitted it, he had remained silent. He left them as soon as they reached the Pantheon, to watch the Marchioness' carriage, which followed theirs, and attached himself so entirely to Amanda, that he forgot that the eyes of jealousy and malevolence were upon them.

But, alas! poor Amanda was doomed to disappointment this evening. Lady Greystock, according to a hint she had received, after a few rounds, stepped up to her, and declared she must accompany her to a seat, as she was convinced her health was yet too weak to bear much fatigue. Amanda assured her she was not in the least fatigued, and that she would prefer walking: besides, she had half promised Lord Mortimer to dance with him. However, she immediately offered her arm to Lady Greystock, who placed her between herself and the Marchioness, thus rendering it utterly impossible for Lord Mortimer to converse with her.

Relieved of her presence, Lady Euphrasia's spirits began to revive, she laughed maliciously with Miss Malcolm, at the disappointment of Lord Mortimer and Amanda. After a few rounds, Sir Charles Bingley, in company with another gentleman, past them; he was, to use Miss Malcolm's own phrase, an immense favourite with her; and Lady Euphrasia felt an ardent desire to have Sir Charles enrolled in the list of her admirers, and both ladies determined he should not again pass without noticing them. They accordingly watched his approach and address him

After paying his compliments in a general way to the whole party, he was making his parting bow, when his companion bid him observe a beautiful girl sitting opposite them.

“Good heaven,” cried Sir Charles, “can this be possible, can this, in reality,” advancing to her seat, “be Miss Fitzalan? This surely;” continued he, “is a meeting as fortunate as unexpected: but for it, I should have been posting back to Ireland in a day or two.”

Amanda blushed deeply, at his thus publicly declaring her power of regulating his actions. Her situation was tantalizing in the extreme to Sir Charles; it precluded all conversation. “But why,” continued he, addressing Amanda, “do you prefer sitting to walking?”

Amanda made no answer; but a glance from her eyes to the ladies, informed him of the reason.

“Let me,” cried he, presenting his hand, “be your knight, and deliver you from captivity.”

She hesitated not to accept his offer; and hastened forward to Lady Araminta, who had stopt for her.

“How little,” cried Sir Charles, “did I imagine such happiness was in store for me this evening.”

“Sir Charles,” said Amanda, endeavouring, though in vain, to withdraw her hand, “you have learned the art of flattery since your return to England.”

“I wish,” cried he, “I had learned the art of expressing as I wish, the sentiments I feel.”

Lord Mortimer at this instant appeared, he seemed to recoil at this situation of Amanda, whose hand was yet detained in Sir Charles’.

On rejoining the party, she hoped again to have been joined by Lord Mortimer; but his lordship deserted them, yet almost continually contrived to intercept the party; he was really displeased with Amanda; he thought she might as well have left her seat before, as after Sir Charles’ appearance, and he resolved to watch her closely.

Amanda, from disappointment, soon grew languid, and was rejoiced when Lady Araminta proposed returning home.

Lady Araminta and Amanda arrived some time before any of the rest of the party: her ladyship said, "that her leaving next day was to attend the nuptials of a particular friend," and was expressing the hope, that on her return, she should often be favoured with the company of Amanda, when Lord Mortimer suddenly entered. He looked pleased and surprised, and taking a seat on the sofa between them, exclaimed, "May I," looking at Amanda, "say that chance is now as propitious to me, as it was some time ago to Sir Charles Bingley? Tell me," continued he, "were you not agreeably surprised to-night?"

"By the Pantheon, undoubtedly, my lord."

"And by Sir Charles Bingley?"

"No, he is too slight an acquaintance, either to give pleasure by his presence, or pain by his absence."

This was just what Lord Mortimer wanted to hear, and Amanda's looks evinced her sincerity.

"I cannot persuade myself," said Lady Araminta, "that Miss Fitzalan is an acquaintance of but two days, I feel such an interest in her welfare, such a sisterly regard"—she paused, and looked expressively on her brother and Amanda.

"Oh, my sister," cried he, "encourage that sisterly affection. Who so worthy of possessing it as Miss Eitzalan? And who but Amanda," continued he, softly whispering to her, "shall have a right to claim it?"

The stopping of the carriages now announced the return of the party: and soon after supper the company departed.

The next morning Lady Greystock went out to her lawyer, and Amanda was sitting at work in the dressing-room, when Sir Charles Bingley was an-

nounced. He now expressed, if possible, more pleasure at seeing her than the preceding night. The particularity and ardour of his expressions, Amanda wished and endeavoured to repress; she therefore answered him with cold and studied caution. Half-resenting it, he snatched her hand, in spite of her efforts to prevent it, and was declaring he could not bear it, when the door opened, and Lord Mortimer appeared. He retreated a few steps in evident embarrassment, then bowing coolly, again advanced and took a seat. Amanda was the first that broke silence: she asked, in a hesitating voice, "Whether Lady Araminta were yet gone." "No," his lordship gravely replied, "but in a few minutes she proposed setting out, and he meant to accompany her a part of the way." "So, till her ladyship was ready," cried Sir Charles, with quickness, "that no time might be lost, you came to Miss Fitzalan?"

Lord Mortimer made no reply; he frowned, and rising directly, slightly saluted Amanda and retired.

Convinced, as she was, that Lord Mortimer had made the visit for the purpose of speaking more explicitly than he had yet done, she could not conceal her chagrin, nor regard Sir Charles without some displeasure. It had not, however, the effect of making him shorten his visit. His heart was bent on an union with Amanda; though hurt by her indifference, he would not allow himself to be discouraged by it.

Lady Greystock had a numerous and brilliant acquaintance in London. Sir Charles was well known to them, and therefore almost constantly attended Amanda wherever she went. His unremitting attention excited universal observation; and he was publicly declared the professed admirer of Lady Greystock's beautiful companion. The Marchioness and Lady Euphrasia supposed that, as she was not sure of Lord Mortimer, she would accept Sir Charles; and thought this measure would remove all apprehen-

sions relative to Lord Mortimer, yet the idea of the wealth and consequence she would derive from it, almost distracted them.

Lord Mortimer again resumed his reserve: he was frequently in company with Amanda, but never paid her any attention: he was indeed determined to regulate his conduct by hers to Sir Charles. The period for Lady Araminta's return was now arrived, and Amanda was anxiously expecting her, when she heard from Lady Euphrasia that her ladyship had been ill in the country, and would not therefore leave it for some time. This was a severe disappointment to Amanda, who had hoped, by her ladyship's means, to have seen less of Sir Charles, and more of Lord Mortimer.

CHAPTER XXIV.

And why should such, within herself, she cried,
Lock the lost wealth, a thousand want beside?

Parnell.

AMANDA was sitting alone in the drawing-room one morning, when a gentleman was shown into it, to wait for Lady Greystock. The stranger was about the middle period of life: his dress announced him a military man, and his thread bare coat seemed to declare, that whatever laurels he had gathered, they were barren ones.

The day was uncommonly severe, and the stranger shivered with cold.

"I declare young lady," cried he, as he took the chair which Amanda had placed for him by the fire, "I think I should not tremble more before an enemy, than I do before this day: I don't know but what it is as essential for a subaltern officer to stand cold as well as fire."

Amanda smiled: and they entered into conversation. At length Lady Greystock entered the room. The stranger rose, and his paleness increased.

"So, Mr. Rushbrook," at last, drawled out her ladyship,—“So, Sir, but pray be seated.”

Amanda now retired.

As she leaned against a window, she saw Rushbrook cross the street: his walk was the slow and lingering walk of dejection and disappointment, he raised his hand to his eyes: Amanda supposed to wipe away his tears, and her own fell at the supposition.

Lady Greystock's woman now appeared, to desire she would come down to her lady, who received her with an exulting laugh.

“I have good news to tell you, my dear,” exclaimed she, “that poor wretch, Rushbrook, has lost the friend who was to have supported him in the law-suit; and the lawyers finding the sheet-anchor gone, have steered off, and left him to shift for himself: the miserable creature and his family must certainly starve: only think of his assurance; he came to say, indeed he would now be satisfied with a compromise.”

“Well, madam,” said Amanda, “Well, madam,” repeated her ladyship, mimicking her manner, “do you think he has any claim on me?”

“Yes,” replied Amanda, “if not upon your justice, at least upon your humanity.”

“Upon my word,” exclaimed Lady Greystock, “I advise you, my dear, in future, to keep your notions to yourself.”

In the evening they went to a large party at the Marchioness', but it could not remove the pensiveness of Amanda's spirits; the emaciated form of Rushbrook, returning to his desolate family, dwelt upon her mind.

From such reflections she was disturbed by the entrance of Sir Charles Bingley. As usual, he took his station by her, and a few minutes after him, Lord Mortimer appeared. A party for vingt-un was formed, in which Amanda joined, from a wish to avoid the assiduities of Sir Charles; but he took care to secure a seat next hers, and Lord Mortimer sat opposite to them.

"Bingley," said a gentleman, "you are certainly the most changeable fellow in the world. About three weeks ago you were hurrying everything for a journey to Ireland, as if life and death depended upon your expedition, and here I find you still."

"I deny the imputation of changeableness," replied the Baronet, "all my actions are regulated," and he glanced at Amanda, "by one source, one object."

Amanda blushed, and caught at that moment a penetrating look from Lord Mortimer.

Her situation was painful: she dreaded his attentions would be imputed to encouragement from her, she had often tried to suppress them, and she resolved her next efforts should be more resolute.

Sir Charles on reaching Pall-Mall the next morning, found Amanda alone.

"You find," said he, "by what you heard last night, that my conduct has excited some surprise; I assure you my friends think I must be deranged to relinquish so suddenly a journey I appeared so anxious to take: suffer me," continued he, taking her hand, "to assign the true reason for this apparent change." "Sir Charles," replied Amanda, "'tis time to terminate this trifling."

"Oh let it then be terminated," said he, with eagerness, "by your consenting to my happiness; by your accepting my hand,"

Amanda was hurt at the idea of giving him pain: but she assured him that friendship was the only return in her power to make him.

He quitted the house: his pride at first urged him to give up Amanda for ever: but his tenderness soon opposed this resolution. Without knowing it, he rambled to St. James'-square, and having heard of the friendship between Lord Cherbury and Fitzalan, he deemed his lordship a proper person to apply to on the present occasion. He accordingly repaired to his house, and found the Earl and Lord

Mortimer sitting together. After paying the usual compliments, "I have come, my lord," said he, "to intreat your interest in an affair, which materially concerns my happiness, and I trust your lordship will excuse my entreaty, when I inform you, it relates to Miss Fitzalan."

The Earl, with much politeness, assured him, "he should feel happy in an opportunity of serving him."

Sir Charles then acquainted him of the proposals he had just made her, and her absolute rejection of them: and expressed his hope that Lord Cherbury would try to influence her in his favour.

"It is very extraordinary indeed," cried his lordship, "that Miss Fitzalan should decline such a honourable proposal: I will write to-day to Mr. Fitzalan, and you may depend upon my seconding your proposal with all my interest."

This promise satisfied Sir Charles, and he soon after withdrew. Lord Mortimer was now pretty well convinced of the state of Amanda's heart: and he delayed not many minutes after Sir Charles' departure, going to Pall-Mall: and having learnt Lady Greystock was out, he ascended to the drawing-room, where Amanda was seated.

CHAPTER XXV.

Go bid the needle its dear north forsake,
 To which with trembling rev'rence it does bend;
 Go bid the stones a journey upward make;
 Go bid the ambitious flame no more ascend:
 And when these false to their old motions prove,
 Then will I cease thee, thee alone to love. *Cowley.*

THE book she was reading, dropt from Amanda, and she arose in visible agitation.

"I fear," said his Lordship, "I have intruded upon you, but my apology for doing so, must be my ardent wish for a mutual eclaireissement."

He took her trembling hand, and led her to the

sofa. As a means of leading to the desired eclaireissement, he related the agonies he had suffered at returning to Tudor Hall, and finding her gone. He described the hopes and fears which alternately fluctuated in his mind during his continuence in Ireland. He mentioned the resolution (though painful in the extreme) which he had adopted on the first appearance of Sir Charles Bingley's particularity; and finally, concluded, by assuring her his tenderness had never known diminution.

Encouraged by this assurance, Amanda informed him of the reason of her precipitate journey from Wales, and the incidents which prevented her meeting him in Ireland.

Restored to the confidence of Mortimer, Amanda appeared dearer to his soul than ever; and he pressed her to his bosom. Yet in the midst of his transport, a sudden gloom clouded his countenance, and he exclaimed, "Would to heaven, I could say all obstacles to our future happiness were removed."

Amanda shuddered and remained silent.

"That my father will throw difficulties in the way to our union, I cannot deny my apprehensions of," said Lord Mortimer; "he has long set his heart on a connection with the Rosline family: though fully determined in my intentions, I have hitherto forbore an explicit declaration of them to him, trusting that some propitious chance would yet second my wishes, and save me the painful necessity of disturbing the harmony which has ever subsisted between us."

"Oh! my Lord," said Amanda, turning pale, and shrinking from him, "let me not be the unfortunate cause of disturbing that harmony: comply with the wishes of Lord Cherbury, marry Lady Euphrosia, and let me be forgotten."

"Amanda," cried his Lordship, "allow me not yourself of being the cause of any disagreement between us; had I never seen you, with respect to Lady

Euphrasia, I should have felt the same inability to comply with his wishes; to me, her person is not more displeasing than her mind; in you I have found such a woman, such a being, as I candidly confess, some time ago, I thought it impossible to meet with; to you I am bound by a sentiment even stronger than love, by honour, and with real gratitude acknowledge my obligation, in being permitted to atone in some degree, for my errors relative to you. But, convinced as I am of the dissimilarity of my father's inclinations and mine, I think it better to give no intimation of my present intentions, which, if permitted by you, I am unalterably determined on fulfilling, as I should consider it as highly insulting to him, to incur his prohibition, and then act in defiance to it, though my heart would glory in avowing its choice. Deem me not too precipitate, my Amanda, if I ask you to-morrow night, by a private union, to put yourself under my protection."

"Mention it no more, my Lord," said Amanda, in a faltering accent: "no longer delude your imagination, nor mine, with the hopes of being united."

Hitherto she had believed Lord Cherbury's approbation to his son's wishes would be obtained: her dream of happiness was over, the moment she heard Lord Cherbury's consent was not to be asked, from a fear of its being refused; she trembled, and unable to support herself, sunk against Mortimer's shoulder while a shower of tears proclaimed her agony. Alarmed by her emotion, Lord Mortimer hastily demanded its source, and the reason of the words which had just escaped her.

"Because, my Lord," replied she, "I cannot consent to a clandestine measure, nor bear you to incur Lord Cherbury's displeasure on my account."

"In choosing you as the partner of my future days," replied he, "I do not infringe the moral obligation which exists between father and son. Nothing would have tempted me to propose a private

union, but the hope of escaping many disagreeable circumstances by it, if you persist, however, in rejecting it, I shall openly avow my intentions, for a longer continuance of anxiety I cannot support."

"Do you think, then," said Amanda, "I would enter your family amidst confusion and altercation? No! my Lord, rashly or clandestinely, I will never consent to enter it."

"Is this the happiness I promised myself would crown our reconciliation?" exclaimed Lord Mortimer. "Will Amanda make no sacrifice to the man who adores her, and whom she professes to esteem?"

"Any sacrifice, my Lord, compatible with virtue and filial duty, most willingly would I make: but beyond these limits, I must not, I cannot, will not step."

"Do not suffer too great a degree of refinement to involve you in wretchedness, my Amanda," cried Lord Mortimer; "when the act was past, my father would naturally lose his resentment, from perceiving its inefficacy. Araminta adores you: and your father, happy in your happiness, would be convinced that his notions hitherto, were too scrupulous."

"Ah, my Lord, your arguments have not the effect you desire, situated as we are, our only expedient is to separate."

Tears trickled down the pale cheeks of Amanda as she spoke: she believed that they must part, and the belief was attended with a pang of unutterable anguish. Pleased and pained by her sensibility, Lord Mortimer clasped her to his bosom.

"Ah, my Amanda," said he, "life would be tasteless, if not spent with you. A sudden thought," resumed he, after pausing a few minutes, "has just occurred: I have an aunt, the only remaining sister of Lord Cherbury, a generous, tender, exalted woman, I have ever been her particular favourite: my Amanda, I know, is the very kind of being she would select for my wife: she is now in the country: I will

write immediately, inform her of our situation, and entreat her to come up to town, to use her influence with my father in our favour. Her fortune is large; and I have no doubt she would render the loss of Lady Euphrasia's fortune immaterial to her brother."

This scheme appeared feasible to Amanda; and she gave her consent to its being tried.

Lord Mortimer described the various schemes he had planned for their mode of life. He dwelt with pleasure on the calm and rational joys they should experience at Tudor Hall; nor could forbear hinting at the period when new tendernesses, new sympathies, would be awakened in their souls. He was expressing a wish of having Fitzalan a constant resident with them, when the return of Lady Greystock's carriage effectually disturbed him.

"So, so," said Lady Greystock, "this has been Miss Fitzalan's levee-day: why I declare, my dear, now that I know the agreeable tête-à-têtes you can enjoy, I shall feel no uneasiness at leaving you to yourself."

Amanda blushed deeply, and Lord Mortimer thought, in this speech, he perceived a degree of irony, which seemed to say all was not right in the speaker's heart towards Amanda; and soon departed.

Lady Greystock learned from her maid the length of Lord Mortimer's visit, and was convinced that something material had happened in the course of it. In the evening they were engaged to a party, and ere they separated after dinner, to dress for it, a plain looking woman was shown into the room, who Amanda instantly recollected to be the person at whose house she and her father had lodged on quitting Devonshire, to secrete themselves from Belgrave. This woman had been bribed to serve him, and had forced several letters upon Amanda, who, to her exclamation of surprise and pleasure, only returned a cool bow, and directly left the room.

Mrs. Jennings had been housekeeper to Lady

Greystock during her residence in England; and still retained her favour. Lady Greystock was surprised to see she and Amanda know each other, and enquired minutely how the acquaintance had commenced. The manner in which she mentioned Amanda convinced Mrs. Jennings she was not high in her estimation, and from this conviction, she thought she might safely assert any falsehood she pleased against her.

She told her ladyship "that near a year back, Miss Fitzalan had been a lodger of hers, and also an old officer, she called her father. Miss was followed by such a set of gallants, she really thought the reputation of her house would have been ruined. Among them was a Colonel Belgrave, a sad rake, who she believed was the favourite. She was determined on making them decamp, when suddenly Miss went off, and the Colonel disappeared at the same time."

Fitzalan's character, and Amanda's conduct forbade Lady Greystock's believing what Mrs. Jennings said. She resolved, however, to relate all she heard to the Marchioness, without betraying the smallest doubt of its veracity.

It may appear strange that Lady Greystock, after taking Amanda, unsolicited, under her protection, should seek to injure her: but Lady Greystock was a woman devoid of principle. She had enjoyed so much happiness in her matrimonial connections, that she had no objection again to enter the list of hymens, and Lord Cherbury was the object of her present wishes. The Marchioness had hinted, in pretty plain terms, that if she counteracted Lord Mortimer's intentions respecting Amanda, she would forward hers relative to Lord Cherbury.

The next morning she communicated her important intelligence to the Marchioness and Lady Euphrasia.

Joy and exultation sat upon their features, at the

charming prospect of injuring Amanda's character. They considered their measures would be more successful for being gradually brought about, and therefore resolved rather to undermine, than strike directly at the peace of Amanda.

Like Lady Greystock, they disbelieved Mrs. Jennings' tale; but like her ladyship, confined this disbelief to their own bosoms.

After some consultation, it was agreed, as a means of expediting their plot, that Lady Greystock and Amanda should immediately remove to the Marchioness' house.

Lady Greystock on her return, mentioned to Amanda the invitation she had given them to her house, which she declared she could not refuse. She also told Amanda that both the Marchioness and Lady Euphrasia wished to prove to the world, that any coolness which existed between their families, was reproved by her becoming their guest.

This projected removal was extremely disagreeable to Amanda: her part, however, was acquiescence: and the next morning they took up their residence under the Marquis of Rosline's roof, to the infinite surprise and mortification of Lord Mortimer, who, like Amanda, anticipated the disagreeable consequences which would result from it.

The altered manners of the Marchioness and Lady Euphrasia, surprised Amanda: she found herself perfect mistress of her time and actions: and when she saw Lord Mortimer, no lowering looks from the Marchioness or Lady Euphrasia prevented their frequently conversing together. The Marchioness made her several elegant presents, and Lady Euphrasia frequently dropped the formal appellation of Miss Fitzalan, for the more familiar one of Amanda.

Sir Charles Bingley still persisted in his attentions, and visited constantly at the Marquis'.

Amanda had been about a fortnight in Portman-square, when she went one night with the Mar-

chioness, Lady Euphrasia, Miss Malcolm, and Lady Greystock, to the Pantheon. Immediately on her entrance, she was joined by Sir Charles Bingley, and she found she must either dance with him, as he requested, or consent to listen to his usual conversation. The dance being over, he was conducting her to get some refreshment, when a gentleman hastily stepping forward, saluted him by name. Amanda started at the voice, she raised her eyes, and beheld Colonel Belgrave.

She turned pale, and trembled, and involuntarily exclaimed, "Gracious heaven!" Her head grew giddy, and she caught Sir Charles' arm to prevent her falling.

Alarmed by her paleness and agitation, he hastily demanded the cause of her disorder. "Oh take me, take me from this room," was all Amanda could pronounce. Colonel Belgrave enquired tenderly, what he could do to serve her, and at the same time attempted to take her hand. Her agitation now became contagious; it was visible to Sir Charles that it proceeded from seeing Belgrave, and he trembled as he supported her.

Belgrave offered to support her from the room, but she motioned to repulse him.

At the door they met Lord Mortimer entering. Terrified by Amanda's situation, all caution, all reserve forsook him. Unable to answer his questions herself, Sir Charles said "she had been taken ill after dancing," and added, "he would resign her to his Lordship's protection while he went to procure her a chair."

In a few minutes he returned, and told her he had procured a chair. She thanked him with grateful sweetness for his attention. Lord Mortimer wished to attend her to Portman-Square, but she thought it would appear too particular, and would not allow it. She retired to her room immediately on her return, and endeavoured, though unsuccessfully, to compose her spirits.

Sir Charles returned, arm in arm with Belgrave, to the room. "Belgrave," said he abruptly, "you know Miss Fitzalan?"

Belgrave answered not hastily, at last, "I do know Miss Fitzalan," cried he, "her father was my tenant in Devonshire: she is one of the loveliest girls I ever knew." "But it is somewhat extraordinary to me, that instead of noticing you as a friend or acquaintance," said Sir Charles, "she looked alarmed and agitated." "My dear Bingley," exclaimed Belgrave, "surely you cannot be a stranger to the caprices of the female mind." "It is very extraordinary to me, I own," resumed Sir Charles, "that Miss Fitzalan should have behaved as she did to you. Were you and her family ever very intimate?"

An invidious smile lurked on Belgrave's countenance at this question: and snatching away his arm, he rushed into the crowd.

Sir Charles sought him through the room, till convinced of his departure, and resolved the next morning to entreat him to deal candidly with him.

He was preparing for this visit after breakfast, when the following letter was brought him:—

"If Sir Charles Bingley has the least regard for his honour or tranquillity, he will immediately relinquish Miss Fitzalan; this caution comes from a friend whom delicacy, not want of veracity, urges to this secret mode of giving it."

Sir Charles perused and reperused the letter; he recognised the writing of Colonel Belgrave. He flew to his house; the Colonel was alone.

"Belgrave," said Sir Charles, in almost breathless agitation, "are you the author of this letter?"

Belgrave took it, read it, but continued silent.

"Oh, Belgrave," exclaimed Sir Charles, "pity and relieve my suspense." "I am the author," replied Belgrave, solemnly, "Miss Fitzalan and I were once tenderly attached; I trust I am no deliberate libertine, but when a lovely seducing girl was

purposely thrown in my way—" "Oh stop," cried Sir Charles. His emotion overpowered him, and he leaned on a table. "Amanda," he continued, "never encouraged me, I therefore cannot accuse her of deceit."

"She never encouraged you," replied Belgrave, "because she was ambitious of a higher title; she aspires to Mortimer's hand."

"I shall return immediately to Ireland," said Sir Charles, "and endeavour to forget I ever saw her."

Sir Charles Bingley and Colonel Belgrave, in early life, had contracted a friendship for each other, which time had strengthened in the one, but reduced to a shadow in the other. On meeting the Colonel unexpectedly in town, Sir Charles had informed him of his intentions relative to Amanda. His heart throbbed at the mention of her name; he had long endeavoured to discover her, and now removed from the protection of her father, he believed she could not escape the snare he should spread for her; and as a means of expediting his success, under the appearance of feeling, urged Sir Charles' return to Ireland.

The easy credit which Sir Charles' unsuspecting temper gave to the vile allegations of Belgrave, cannot be wondered at, when his long intimacy, but total ignorance of his real character, is considered.

Amanda could not be forgotten, the hold she had taken on his heart was not to be shaken off: this, however, he considered weakness, and prepared to return immediately to Ireland.

CHAPTER XXVI.

Oh how this tyrant doubt torments my breast! *Otway.*

LORD Mortimer, distressed by Amanda's indisposition, hastened at an earlier hour than usual to Portman-square, and was ushered into Lady Euphrasias'

dressing-room, and scarcely were the usual compliments over, ere he enquired about Miss Fitzalan.

Lady Euphrasia said, "she was still unwell, and had not yet left her apartment." "She has not yet recovered her surprise of last night," exclaimed Miss Malcolm; with a malicious smile. "What surprise?" asked his lordship. "Dear me," replied Miss Malcolm, "was not your lordship present when she met Colonel Belgrave?" "No," said he, changing colour, "but what had Colonel Belgrave to say to Miss Fitzalan?" "That is a question your lordship must put to the young lady herself," answered Miss Malcolm. "Now I declare," cried Lady Euphrasia, "'tis probable her illness did not proceed from seeing Colonel Belgrave: you know she never mentioned being acquainted with him, though her father was his tenant in Devonshire."

Lord Mortimer grew more disturbed.

Lady Euphrasia mentioned their intention of going to the play that evening, and invited him to be of the party: he accepted her invitation, and retired.

His visible distress was a source of infinite mirth to the young ladies, which they indulged the moment he left the room.

Lord Mortimer was unhappy: from residing more constantly in England than Sir Charles Bingley had done, he had had more opportunities of learning Belgrave's real character, which he knew to be that of a professed libertine. It was strange he thought, that when Amanda had informed him she once resided in Devonshire, she should conceal her father being the Colonel's tenant.

Thoughtful and pensive, he reached home just as Sir Charles Bingley was entering the door.

He attended him to the Earl, who acquainted him that he had received a letter from Mr. Fitzalan, in which he stated, it would give him the truest happiness to have Miss Fitzalan united to a character so truly estimable as Sir Charles. "He has written to

his daughter," continued Lord Cherbury, "I have therefore no doubt, Sir Charles, but everything will succeed as you wish." "I am sorry, my lord," cried Sir Charles, in an agitated voice, "that I ever troubled your lordship in this affair, as I have now, and for ever relinquished all ideas of an union with Miss Fitzalan." "The resolution is somewhat extraordinary and sudden," replied the Earl, but you are certainly the best judge of your own actions: I must suppose your conduct will never disparage your honour, nor cast a slight upon Miss Fitzalan." "That, my lord, you may be assured of," said Sir Charles, "had things succeeded as I hoped and expected, I cannot deny but I should have been happier than I am at present." He then bowed and retired.

Lord Mortimer had listened with astonishment to Sir Charles' relinquishment of Amanda. Sir Charles' agitation seemed to imply a cause even more powerful than her coldness for resigning her: he recollected that the Baronet and the Colonel were intimate friends, and was almost distracted by apprehensions.

The indisposition of Amanda was more of the mental than bodily kind, and on the first mention of a party to the play, she agreed to join it, in hopes that the amusement would remove her dejection.

Lord Mortimer and Freelove attended the ladies to the play. His lordship found an opportunity of tenderly enquiring after Amanda's health. When they were seated in the house, he perceived a lady in another box, to whom he wished to speak, and accordingly left his party. This lady offered him a seat by herself which he accepted. From time to time, Lord Mortimer directed his glances towards Amanda, his fair companion noticed the wandering of his eyes, and her own involuntarily followed the same course. She was speaking at the moment, but suddenly stopt, and Lord Mortimer saw her change colour. He turned pale, and asked her if she knew the lady she had been long looking at. "Know her," replied she, "Oh heavens! but too well."

It was by Adela, the lovely and neglected wife of Belgrave, he was sitting.

Curiosity had directed the eyes of Adela to Amanda: at last the picture Oscar Fitzalan had shown her, occurred to her recollection, and she was immediately convinced it was no other than the original of that picture she now saw. Distrest by past recollections, she entreated Lord Mortimer to conduct her from the box, that she might return home.

He entreated her, in the lobby, to tell him, "where she had known the lady she had so attentively regarded," with an earnestness which compelled her to answer him. Adela blushed, and said, "she had no personal knowledge of the lady, but recollected her face, having seen her picture with a gentleman." "And who was that gentleman?" asked Lord Mortimer, with a forced smile. "That," replied Adela with quickness, "I will not tell." Lord Mortimer, recollecting himself, apologized, and led her to a chair.

Miss Malcolm had first made him uneasy; uneasiness introduced doubts which Sir Charles Bingley had increased, and Mrs. Belgrave almost confirmed; her agitation on mentioning the picture, joined to her concealment of the gentleman she had seen it with, tempted him to believe, he was no other than her husband: whose well known profligacy intruded on his memory.

Yet that he might not be accused of yielding rashly to jealousy, he resolved to confine his suspicions to his own bosom, and if he found Amanda encourage Belgrave, he resolved to leave her without an explanation. He returned, at last to the box, and procured a seat behind her. He had not long occupied it, ere Colonel Belgrave (who from a retired part of the house, where he had observed Amanda,) entered the next box, and made his way to the pillar against which she leaned.

At last the hour came for relieving Amanda. As

Lord Mortimer sat next the Marchioness, he was compelled to offer her his hand, and Amanda was the last who quitted the box; a crowd in the lobby impeded their progress. Amanda was close behind the Marchioness, when Belgrave forced his way to her, and attempted to take her hand at the very moment Lord Mortimer turned to look at her, who heard him say, "Dear, though unkind Amanda, why this cruel change in your conduct?"

The eyes of Mortimer flashed fire. "Miss Fitzalan," said he, in a voice trembling through passion, "if you accept my arm, I will make way for you, or at least secure you from impertinence." He handed her to the carriage in silence: he was prest to return to supper with them, but refused. The ladies found the Marquis and Lord Cherbury together. Amanda retired to her chamber immediately after supper. Lord Cherbury, on her retiring, expressed his regret at her coldness to Sir Charles Bingley, by which she lost a most honourable and advantageous attachment.

This was an opportunity for the Marchioness to commence operations against Fitzalan. A glance to Lady Greystock was the signal to begin.

"To those," said Lady Greystock, "who are ignorant of Miss Fitzalan's real motives for refusing Sir Charles, it must appear, no doubt, extraordinary; but ambitious people are not easily satisfied."

Lord Cherbury stared, and asked her meaning. "Why, my Lord," cried she, "I do not know but that it will be more friendly to explain than conceal my meaning: in short, my Lord, Miss Fitzalan, prompted by her father, has cast her eyes on Lord Mortimer. I do not believe Lord Mortimer, at first, gave any encouragement to their designs; but when the girl was continually thrown in his way, it was impossible not to notice her at last. I really express a thorough disapprobation of her coming to London, knowing their motives for desiring the excursion,

but her father never ceased persecuting me, till I consented."

"I never thought," exclaimed Lord Cherbury, whose mind was irritated to a most violent degree against his injured friend, "that Captain Fitzalan could have acted with such duplicity. The subject has discomposed me, and I must beg to be excused for abruptly retiring."

The ladies were enraptured at their success.

The passions of Lord Cherbury were impetuous. He had, as already hinted, secret motives for desiring a connection between his family and the Marquis': and the idea of that desire being defeated, drove him almost to distraction. His feelings were too violent not to seek an immediate vent, and ere he went to bed, he wrote a bitter and reproachful letter to Fitzalan, which concluded with an entreaty, or rather command, to send, without delay, for his daughter.

The innocent Amanda was received the next morning with smiles, by those who were preparing a plot for her destruction.

Whilst at breakfast, a servant informed Lady Greystock a young woman wanted to speak to her.

The Marchioness directed she might be shown up, and a girl about seventeen was ushered into the room.

"So child?" said Lady Greystock. "My father Captain Rushbrook," replied she, in an accent so low as scarcely to be heard, "desired me to deliver this letter to your ladyship."

"Why really," said Lady Greystock, after perusing the letter, "I believe your father takes me for a fool: I am astonished how he can possibly have the assurance to make application to me for relief: no, no! child, it would really be a sin to give him the power to bring up his children in idleness."

Amanda could support the scene no longer, and she descended precipitately to the parlour.

In a few minutes Miss Rushbrook appeared.

Amanda had been watching for her, and now appeared; she started, Amanda caught her hand, and leading her into the parlour, endeavoured to calm her emotion. The poor girl sunk on the chair, and dropping her head on Amanda's bosom, wet it with a shower of tears, as she exclaimed, "Alas! my unfortunate parents, how can I return to behold your misery?" "Where do you reside?" said Amanda, after a pause, "At Kensington." "Kensington," repeated Amanda, "surely in your present situation, you are unable to take such a walk; if you knew a house," continued she, "where you could stay for a short time, I would call for you in a carriage, and leave you at home."

She informed her there was a haberdasher in Bond street, where she could stay till called for.

This point settled, Amanda, fearful of being surprised, conducted her softly to the hall-door, and immediately returned to the drawing-room.

Amanda had a little project in view about the Rushbrooks, but which she carefully concealed.

Out of the allowance her father made her, about ten guineas remained, which she intended laying out in the purchase of some ornaments for her appearance at a ball, to be given the ensuing week, by the Dutchess of B——, and for which Lord Mortimer had engaged her for his partner. To give up going to this ball, and to consecrate to charity the money devoted to vanity, was her project.

The ladies had mentioned their intention of going to an auction. Amanda excused herself from being of the party, saying, "She wanted to make some purchases in the city." She sent for a coach, and was driven to Bond street, where she found Miss Rushbrook.

On their way to Kensington, the tenderness of Amanda conciliated the affection of her young companion: and she related the history of her parents' sorrows.

When the carriage was within a few yards of Rush-

brook's habitation, Amanda stopt it, she took Miss Rushbrook's hand, and slipt a ten pound note into it.

Miss Rushbrook started. "Oh! Madam," she cried, "your goodness,"—tears impeded her futher utterance.

Amanda ordered the door to be opened, and told her companion she would detain her no longer, but would certainly see her again as soon as possible.

Amanda ordered the coachman to drive back to town as fast as possible. They had not proceeded far, when the traces suddenly gave way. This occasioned a delay, which greatly distressed Amanda. At length the coachman remounted his box, and the velocity with which he drove, flattered her with the hope of reaching home before the ladies. Tranquilized by this hope, she again indulged her imagination with ideas of the comfort her little bounty had probably given Rushbrook and his dejected family. She was convinced Lord Mortimer would enquire her reason for not going to the ball, which she determined for the present to conceal.

She asked the footman whether the ladies were returned, and being answered in the affirmative, she enquired the hour, and learned it was just dinner time. Amanda dressed herself with unusual expedition, and repaired to the drawing-room, where she found Lord Mortimer, Freelove, Miss Malcolm, and some other ladies and gentlemen.

"Bless me, child," said Lady Greystock, "were have you been the whole day?"

Amanda replied in a low hesitating voice, "In the city."

"In the city?" repeated Lord Mortimer.

She blushed deeply, as if detected in a falschood.

The conversation now changed.

Lord Mortimer had a reason for his exclamation, she little thought of. He had met the Marchioness and her companions by appointment, at the auc-

tion, not finding Amanda there, he pleaded business as an excuse for withdrawing, and hurrying home, ordered his phaeton, and proceeded towards Kensington. As he passed the coach in which Amanda sat, at the time the traces were mending, he recognized her. Lady Euphrasia had informed him she had excused herself from their party on account of some business in the city. He had never heard of her having any acquaintance in or about Kensington, and was at once alarmed and surprised by discovering her. He drove to some distance from the carriage, and as soon as it began to move, pursued it till it reached town, and then giving his phaeton in charge of the servant, followed it on foot, till he saw Amanda alight at the Marquis of Rosline's. Lord Mortimer walked back with increased disorder to meet his phaeton. As he approached it, he saw Colonel Belgrave by it, on horseback, admiring his horses, and asking to whom they belonged. His acquaintance with the Colonel had hitherto never exceeded a passing bow: now prompted by an irresistible impulse, he saluted him familiarly; enquired "whether he had had a pleasant ride, and how far he had been." "No farther than Kensington," replied the Colonel.

This answer was confirmation strong enough to all Lord Mortimer's fears.

He was engaged to dine at the Marquis', but in the first violence of his feelings, determined to send an apology; however, he changed his resolution. "I will go," said he, "though appearances are against her, she may, perhaps, be able to account for her being at Kensington."

When Amanda entered the room, he thought she appeared embarrassed; but when she said she had been in the city, her duplicity appeared so monstrous to him, that he could not forbear an involuntary repetition of her words. Her blush appeared to him the glow of shame and guilt. It was evident

to him she had seen Belgrave that morning: and that it was the knowledge of the improper influence he had over her heart, which made Sir Charles Bingley so suddenly resign her.

He sat opposite to her at dinner, and his eyes were directed towards her with that tender sadness which we feel on viewing a beloved object we know ourselves on the point of losing for ever.

In the evening Lord Mortimer sat pensively apart from the company. Amanda by chance procured a seat next his. His paleness alarmed her, and she hinted her fears that he was ill.

“I am ill, indeed,” sighed he heavily.

Any further conversation between them was interrupted by Miss Malcolm, who seated herself by Lord Mortimer, to rally him, as she said, into good spirits.

CHAPTER XXVII.

But yet I say,
If imputation and strong circumstances,
Which lead directly to the door of truth,
Will give you satisfaction. you may have it.

Shakespeare.

FROM that evening to the day destined for the ball, nothing material happened. On the morning of that day, as Amanda was sitting with the ladies, Lord Mortimer entered. Lady Euphrasia could talk of nothing but the approaching entertainment.

“I hope your ladyship,” said Amanda, “will be able to-morrow to give me a good description of it.” “Why, I suppose,” cried Lady Euphrasia, “you do not intend going without being able to see and hear for yourself.” “Certainly,” replied Amanda, “I should not, but I do not intend going.” “Bless me, child,” said Lady Greystock, “what whim has entered your head to prevent your going?” “And you really do not go?” exclaimed Lord Mortimer. “I

declare," said the Marchioness, delighted at Amanda's resolution, as it favoured a scheme she had long been projecting, "I wish Euphrasia were as indifferent about amusement as Miss Fitzalan; here she has been complaining of indisposition the whole morning, yet I cannot prevail on her to give up the ball."

Lady Euphrasia, who never felt better in health and spirits, would have contradicted the Marchioness, had not an expressive glance assured her there was an important motive for this assertion.

"May we not hope, Miss Fitzalan," said Lord Mortimer, "that a resolution so suddenly adopted as yours, may be as suddenly changed?" "No, indeed my lord, nor is it so suddenly formed as you seem to suppose."

Lord Mortimer shuddered, as he endeavoured to account for it in his own mind.

"Amanda," said he, in a low voice, "I fear you forget your engagement to me."

Amanda, supposing this alluded to her engagement for the ball, replied, "she had not forgotten it." "For your inability or disinclination to fulfil it then," said he, "will you not account?" "Most willingly, my lord." "When?" asked Lord Mortimer. "Tomorrow, my Lord," replied Amanda, pleased at the idea of telling her real motive for not going to the ball.

In the evening, at Lady Euphrasia's request, she attended at her toilet. At ten she saw the party depart. She continued in Lady Euphrasia's dressing-room, and took up the story of Paul and Mary. Her whole attention was soon engrossed by it: when a sudden noise made her turn her head, and with horror and surprise, she beheld Colonel Belgrave coming forward. She started up, and was springing towards the door, when he caught her in his arms, and forcing her back to the sofa, rudely stopt her mouth.

"Neither cries nor struggles, Amanda," said he,

“will be availing: without the assistance of a friend, you may be convinced, I could not have entered this house; and the same friend will, you may depend upon it, take care that our tête-à-tête is not interrupted. Hesitate not to secure independence to your father, promotion to your brother; and be assured, if the connection I formed in an ill-fated hour, should ever be dissolved, my hand, like my heart, shall be yours.” “Monster!” exclaimed Amanda, “your hand, were it at your disposal, like your other offers, I should spurn with contempt.”

As she spoke, exerting all her strength, she burst from him, and attempted to gain the door; he caught her again in his arms, she screamed aloud:—no one appeared:—her terror increased.

He led her again to the sofa, and thus continued, “You imagined Sir Charles Bingley was a fervent admirer of yours, when, in following you, be assured, he only obeyed the dictates of vanity, which flattered him with the hope of gaining your regard, and being distinguished by it: nothing was further from his thoughts, as he himself confessed to me, than seriously paying his addresses to you; and had you appeared willing, at last, to accept them, he would soon have contrived some scheme to disengage himself from you. The attentions of Lord Mortimer are more dangerous than those of Sir Charles: his purpose once accomplished, he would sacrifice you to Lady Euphrasia. As my situation is known, I cannot be accused of deception, and whatever I promise, will be strictly fulfilled: deliberate therefore, no longer, my Amanda, on the course you shall pursue.” “No,” cried she, “I shall indeed no longer deliberate about it.”

As she spoke, she started from her seat. Belgrave again seized her hand. At this moment a knock was heard at the hall-door. Amanda trembled, and Belgrave paused in a speech he had begun. She supposed it was the Marquis: it was not improbable

he would come to that room: and even if he did, from his malignant temper she knew not whether she should have reason to rejoice or regret his presence. But how great was her confusion, when, instead of his voice, she heard those of the Marchioness and her party! In a moment the dreadful consequences which might ensue from her present situation, rushed upon her mind. By the forced attentions of the Marchioness and Lady Euphrasia, she was not long deceived, and had reason to believe that they would rejoice at this opportunity for traducing her fame, and with horror she saw, that appearances, even in the eyes of candour, would be against her. She had positively, and, unexpectedly, refused to go to the ball: she had expressed delight at the idea of staying at home. Alas! would not all these circumstances be dwelt on?

Half wild at the idea, she exclaimed, in a voice of anguish, "Merciful heaven, I am ruined for ever!"

"No, no," cried Belgrave, flinging himself at her feet, "pardon me, Amanda, I see your principles are invincible; you will be ruined if I am seen with you: conceal me, if possible, till the family are settled, the person who let me in, will then secure my retreat, and I swear solemnly never more to trouble you."

Amanda heard the party ascending the stairs, fear conquered her reluctance to concealment, and she motioned Belgrave to retire to a closet adjoining the dressing-room.

Amanda trembled universally: nor was her agitation diminished, when Lady Euphrasia called to her to open the door. She tottered to it, and almost fainted when she found it locked; with difficulty she opened it, and the whole party, followed by the Marquis, entered.

"Upon my word, Miss Fitzalan," said the Marchioness, "you were determined no one should disturb your meditations: I fear we have surprised you: but poor Euphrasia was taken ill at the ball,

and we were obliged to return with her." "Miss Fitzalan has not been much better," I believe, said Lady Euphrasia, regarding her attentively. "Good Lord, child," cried Lady Greystock, "what is the matter with you? why you look as pale as if you had seen a ghost." "Miss Fitzalan is fond of solitude," exclaimed the Marquis, preventing her reply to Lady Greystock; "when I returned home about an hour ago, I sent to request her company, and I assure you I was refused."

The message indeed had been sent, but never delivered to Amanda.

"I assure you, my Lord," said she, "I heard of no such request."

"Lady Euphrasia now complained of a violent head-ache; the Marchioness wanted to ring for remedies, this Lady Euphrasia opposed: at last, as if suddenly recollecting it, she said, in the closet there was a bottle of eau-de-luce, and rose to get it.

The blood ran cold through the veins of Amanda.

Lord Mortimer observing the disorder of her looks began to tremble: he grasped her hand with a convulsive motion, and exclaimed,

"Amanda, what means this agitation?"

There was a scream from Lady Euphrasia, and she rushed from the closet, followed by Belgrave.

"Gracious heaven!" exclaimed Lord Mortimer, dropping Amanda's hand, and rising precipitately.

Amanda faintly exclaimed, "I am betrayed," and sunk back upon the sofa.

Lord Mortimer started at her exclamation, "Oh heavens!" cried he, and rushed out of the room.

In the hall he was stopt by Mrs. Jane, the maid appointed by the Marchioness to attend Amanda.

"Alack-a-day, my Lord," said she in a whimpering voice, "something dreadful, I fear, has happened above stairs. Oh dear, I am sure if I thought any harm would have come of granting Miss Fitzalan's request, she might have begged and prayed a long

time before I would have obliged her." "Did she desire you to bring Colonel Belgrave to this house?" asked Lord Mortimer. "Oh to be sure she did, my Lord, or how else should I ever have thought of such a thing? she has been begging and praying long enough for me to contrive some way of bringing him here; and she told me a piteous story of his being a sweet-heart of hers before he was married; and how could one resist the poor dear young lady? she cried so, and said she only wanted to bid farewell to her dear Belgrave."

"Merciful powers!" exclaimed Lord Mortimer, "how have I been deceived," and hurried from the house.

Amanda's faculties suffered but a momentary suspension: she opened her eyes, her composure and fortitude returned.

"I am convinced," said she, rising and advancing to the Marquis, "it will shock your lordship to hear that it is the treachery of some person under your roof, has involved me in my present embarrassing situation. For my own justification, it is necessary to acknowledge that I have long been the object of a pursuit from Colonel Belgrave, as degrading to his character as insulting to mine. When he broke so unexpectedly upon me to night, he declared he had a friend in the house, who gave him access to it." "Had not Colonel Belgrave," replied the Marquis, with a malicious sneer, "been voluntarily admitted, he would never have been concealed; no, madam, you would have rejoiced at the opportunity our presence gave you of punishing his temerity. Innocence is bold, it is guilt alone is timorous."

"Oh! I see," said she, in the agony of her soul, "I see I am the dupè of complicated artifice." "As she was intrusted to my care," exclaimed Lady Greystock, "I think it necessary to enquire into the affair. Pray, sir," turning to the Colonel, "by what means did you come here?"

The Colonel, with undiminished assurance, had hitherto stood leaning on a chair.

"That, madam," replied he, "I must be excused from revealing." "Sir," cried the Marquis "I have neither right nor inclination to interfere in Miss Fitzalan's concerns."

The Colonel bowed to the circle, and was retiring, when Amanda flew to him, and caught his arm. "Oh! Belgrave," she said, gasping for breath, "I conjure you to clear my fame."

"My dear creature," said he, in a low voice, yet loud enough to be heard, "you find they are determined not to see the things in the light we wish them viewed: but be assured, whilst I exist, you shall never want comfort nor affluence."

He then gently disengaged himself, and left the room.

"I am sure," said Lady Greystock, "I shall regret all my life the hour I took her under my protection."

"I deem it absolutely necessary," cried the Marquis, "to remove Lady Euphrasia Sutherland from the house, till the young lady chooses to quit it: I shall therefore order the carriage to be ready at an early hour for the villa."

"I shall certainly accompany your lordship," cried the Marchioness, "for I cannot endure her sight, and though she deserves it, it shall not be said that we turned her from the house." "The only measure she should pursue," exclaimed Lady Greystock, "is to set off as soon as possible for Ireland; when she returns to obscurity the affair may die away."

Amanda repaired to her chamber: the housekeeper and Mrs. Jane, followed her thither; she fell into an agony of tears and sobs, which impeded her breathing. In a short time she was able to speak, and requested they would engage a carriage for her at an early hour, to commence her journey to Ireland: this they promised to do, and at her request, retired.

Success, but not happiness, had crowned the Marchioness' scheme. Long had she been meditating on some plan, which should ruin Amanda for ever. With the profligacy of Belgrave she was well acquainted, and inclined from it to believe that he would readily join in any scheme to possess Amanda. On discovering her residence, he had ordered his valet, who was his trusty agent in all his villainies, to endeavour to gain access to the house, that he might discover if there were any chance of introducing him there. The valet soon attached himself to Mrs. Jane, whom the Marchioness had placed about Amanda, from knowing she was capable of any deceitful part. She was introduced to Belgrave, and a handsome present secured her in his interest.

She communicated to the Marchioness particulars of their interview: from that period they had been seeking to bring about such a scene as was at last acted.

Colonel Belgrave was introduced into the closet by Mrs. Jane, through a door from the lobby.

When Lady Euphrasia, who was apprized of the whole plot, declared she was too ill to continue at the ball; Lord Mortimer offered to attend her home: had he not done so, the Marchioness intended to have asked him.

The Marquis left the ladies together, while he went to give orders about his early journey.

Soon after his departure, a loud knocking was heard: it was Lord Mortimer.

"My dear Lord," said the Marchioness, "I am glad you are come back: you may perhaps honour us with your advice on the present occasion." "Indeed," exclaimed Lady Greystock, "I suppose his lordship is at as great a loss to know what is to be done as we are. Were Colonel Belgrave in a situation to make any reparation: but a married man; only think how horrible." "Execrable monster!" cried Mortimer, "but say," continued he, "where is

the unfortunate,"—he could not pronounce the name of Amanda. "In her own room," replied the Marchioness, "I assure you, she behaved not with a little insolence, on Lady Greystock's advising her to return home."

She then proceeded to mention the Marquis' resolution of leaving the house till she had quitted it.

"To return to her father, is certainly the only eligible plan she can pursue," said Lord Mortimer, "but allow me to request, that your ladyship will not impute to insolence, any expression which dropt from her: pity her wounded feelings, and soften her sufferings."

Lady Greystock then related every particular she had heard from Mrs. Jennings, and bitterly lamented her having ever taken Amanda under her protection.

The subject was too painful to be long endured by Lord Mortimer. He had heard the hour fixed for their journey, and precipitately retired.

Exhausted by the violence of her emotions, a temporary forgetfulness stole over the senses of Amanda, on being left to solitude. From this state the sound of a carriage roused her: supposing it the one for her departure, she sprang from the bed, and going to the window, saw instead of one for her, the Marquis, into which he was handing the ladies. As soon as it drove from the door, she rang the bell, and the housekeeper appeared, as Mrs. Jane had attended the Marchioness to the villa; Amanda enquired whether a carriage had been engaged for her.

The housekeeper replied, she had sent for one.

Amanda was packing up her clothes, when a maid entered, and said, "Lord Mortimer was below, and wished to speak to her."

She sprang past the maid, and in a moment found herself in the arms of Lord Mortimer.

He supported her to a sofa; in a little time she raised her head from his shoulder, and exclaimed, "Oh! you are come! I know you are come to com-

fort me." "Would to heaven," he answered, "I were capable of either giving or receiving comfort. Oh never can my heart forget the love and esteem it once bore Amanda." "Once bore her," repeated Amanda, "once bore her, Lord Mortimer! do you say? then you wish to imply they no longer exist."

Her tone of anguish pierced Mortimer's heart, and he walked to the window to hide his emotion.

His words, his silence, all conveyed a fatal truth to Amanda. Her anguish was almost too great to bear, yet the pride of injured innocence made her wish to conceal it: she determined to try and leave the room without Lord Mortimer's knowledge: but ere she gained the door, her strength failed her, and she sank on the floor.

Lord Mortimer wildly called for assistance: he carried her back to the sofa: kissed her pale lips, and wept over her.

The house-keeper at last appeared. Heavy sighs at length gave hopes of her restoration. Lord Mortimer, unable to support her pathetic lamentations, determined to depart ere she was perfectly sensible.

"Miss Fitzalan," said he, "will wish, I am convinced, to quit this house immediately; I shall take upon myself to procure her a carriage, also a proper attendant for her journey: be kind, be gentle to her my good woman, and depend on my eternal gratitude. When she is recovered, deliver this letter to her."

The housekeeper promised to observe his injunctions, and he departed.

To Ireland, with Amanda, he intended sending an old female servant, who had been an attendant of his mother's, and his own man.

The letter he had put in the housekeeper's hand, excited her curiosity; Amanda was not in a situation to perceive what she did, and she opened it. How great was her amazement, on finding it contained a bank note for five hundred pounds: the words were as follow

“Consider me, Amanda, in the light of a brother. It is necessary you should return immediately to your father; hesitate not then about using the enclosed, your complying with my request will prove that you yet retain a friendship for

Mortimer.”

“What a sum,” cried the housekeeper, as she examined the note, “what a nice little independency would this, with what I have already saved, be for a honest woman! What a pity such a creature as this should possess it! Could she but get Amanda off, ere the carriage from Lord Mortimer arrived, she believed all would succeed as she could wish. Full of this idea she ran out, and desired a footman immediately to procure a chaise for Miss Fitzalan. She then returned to Amanda, who was just beginning to move.

Amanda looked round the room,—“Is Lord Mortimer gone then?” “Lord, to be sure he is,” cried the house-keeper, “he said you should never have another opportunity of deceiving him.”

Amanda flung herself upon the ground, exclaiming, “This last stroke is more than I can bear.”

The house-keeper grew alarmed, lest her agitation should retard her departure; she raised her forcibly from the ground, and said, “she must compose herself for her journey, the Marchioness had given absolute orders to have her sent from the house early in the morning.”

At last the carriage came; with a trembling frame, and half broken-hearted, Amanda entered it. She saw Nicholas, the footman who had procured it, ready mounted to attend her. She told him it was unnecessary to do so, but he declared he could not think of letting so young a lady travel unprotected. The carriage took the road to Park-gate. After travelling four hours, the chaise stopped at a small house on the road-side. Amanda was unwilling to enter it, but the horses were here to be changed; and she was shown into a little dirty parlour. She was much as-

tonished to see Nicholas enter the room and seat himself by her. She rose abruptly, and desired him to retire.

Nicholas caught her in his arms, exclaiming, "Bless me, how hoity-toity you are grown; after what happened yesterday at home, I think you need not be so coy with me." "Oh! save me heavens," was all the affrighted Amanda could articulate.

The door opened, a waiter appeared and told Nicholas he was wanted. Amanda sunk upon a chair, and her head turned giddy at the dangers which surrounded her, she now could only raise her hands to heaven and supplicate its protection.

She passed some minutes in this manner, when the landlady entered: she came, she said, with Nicholas' duty, and he was sorry he was obliged to go back to town without seeing her safe to her journey's end.

"Is he really gone?" asked Amanda, with all the eagerness of joy. "Yes," the woman said. "Is the carriage ready?" cried Amanda.

She was informed that it was.

"Let me fly then," said she, running to the door, "or the wretch may return."

The chaise had proceeded about two miles, when in the middle of a solitary lane, it suddenly stopped. Amanda looked out, and beheld with horror Colonel Belgrave, and Nicholas standing by him; the latter opened the door, Belgrave stepped into the carriage, and the horses set off at full speed. Colonel Belgrave's valet had been secreted by Mrs. Jane, the preceding night, in the house. On hearing from him that the family were gone to the Marquis' villa, Belgrave believed he could easily prevail on the domestics to deliver up Amanda to him. Elated with this hope, he reached the house, just after she had quitted it. Belgrave and his valet immediately set out in pursuit of her. The sight of a chase at the little inn prompted their enquiries: and on finding it waited for Amanda, the Colonel sent for Nicholas, and se-

cured him in his interest. It was settled they should repair to a wood, by which the postilion was bribed to pass, and from thence to proceed to a country-house of the Colonel's. Their scheme accomplished, Nicholas again turned his face towards London.

The carriage and attendants Lord Mortimer procured for Amanda, arrived even earlier than the house-keeper had expected, and were followed by his lordship himself. Great was his dismay, his astonishment, when the house-keeper informed him she was gone.

"Gone?" he repeated, changing colour.

The housekeeper said, without her knowledge, Miss Fitzalan had a chaise hired, and the moment it came to the door stepped into it, notwithstanding she was told his lordship meant to provide every thing proper for her journey himself; but she said, "my lord," cried the housekeeper, "she wanted none of your care."

Lord Mortimer asked if she had any attendant, and whether she took the letter.

The housekeeper answered both these questions in the affirmative. "Truly, my lord," she continued, "I believe your lordship said something in that letter which pleased her, for she smiled on opening it, and said, 'Well, this is something like comfort.'"

"And was she really so mean?" he was on the point of asking, but every idea of this kind gave way to anxiety on her account, and he determined to pursue, and see her safe himself to the destined port.

He entered the chaise, and promised to reward the postilions if they used expedition. They had changed horses but once, when Lord Mortimer saw Nicholas approaching. He stopped the carriage, and called out, "Where have you left Miss Fitzalan?" "With Colonel Belgrave, my lord," replied Nicholas, "who was waiting, by appointment, on the road for her."

Lord Mortimer hesitated whether to return to

London, but at last, resolved to proceed to Park gate, and discover whether Amanda had returned to Ireland. They had not proceeded far, when they overtook a travelling chaise. As Lord Mortimer passed, he looked in, and beheld Amanda reclined on the bosom of Belgrave.

He closed his eyes and sighed out the name of perfidious Amanda. When they had got some way before the other chaise, he desired the postilion to return by another road to London.

Amanda, it was evident, had put herself under the protection of Belgrave, and to know whether she went to Ireland was now of no consequence to him.

Almost the first object he beheld, on alighting at St. James'-square, was his aunt, Lady Martha Dorrimer, who, in compliance with his urgent request, had hastened to London. Had a spectre crossed his sight, he could not have been more shocked.

"Well, my dear Frederic," said her ladyship, "you see I have lost no time in obeying your wishes: but where is this little divinity of thine? positively I will be introduced this very evening." "Oh God!" cried Lord Mortimer, "she is lost for ever."

The dreadful explanation Lord Mortimer now found himself under the necessity of giving, so powerfully assailed him at this moment, that his senses gave way, and he actually fainted on the floor.

Lady Martha saw that something dreadful had happened; and what this was, Lord Mortimer, as soon as he recovered, informed her.

He then retired to his chamber, he felt almost convinced that the hold Amanda had on his affections could not be withdrawn; he had considered her as scarcely less than his wife, and had she been really such, her present conduct could not have given him more anguish.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

And let a maid thy pity share.

* * * * *

Who seeks for rest, but finds despair

Companion of her way.

Goldsmith.

AMANDA had fainted soon after Belgrave entered the carriage, and was reclining on his bosom in a state of insensibility, when Lord Mortimer passed.

About nine o'clock at night, they entered an extensive wood, in the centre of which stood Belgrave's mansion. He carried Amanda himself into it. Some female domestics tried to recover her from the state in which she lay. One of them presented a letter to the Colonel, which excited no little perturbation in his mind; it came express to inform him that his uncle, whose estate and title he was heir to, lay at the point of death, and that his presence was immediately required.

The Colonel was not so absolutely engrossed by love, as to be incapable of attending to his interest.

He dismissed the woman, who had brought Amanda a little to herself. "You must be sensible, my dear Amanda," said he, with coolness, "that your reputation is as much gone as if you had complied with my wishes: since it is sacrificed, why not enjoy the advantages which may, which will certainly attend the reality of that sacrifice?" "Monster!" cried Amanda. "Conquer your obstinacy, Amanda," replied he, "against I return, or I shall not promise, but what I may be irritated at last. Excuse me, my dear creature, if I take your purse in my own keeping; my domestics may be faithful when they have no inducement to the contrary: but no bribery, no corruption you know."

He then very deliberately took Amanda's purse and watch from her pocket, and deposited them in his own. He had already given directions to his ser-

vants concerning their treatment to Amanda; and directly set off for his uncle's.

Amanda was supported to a chamber, and laid down in her clothes. They offered her bread and wine, but she was too sick to touch any. Death, she thought approaching. "Ah! why, why," she cried, "did I suffer myself to be separated from my father?"

A young woman leaned over Amanda: she was the daughter to Belgrave's steward, and neither she nor her father possessed sufficient virtue to reject the offers Belgrave made them on her account. In the height of his passion he had made her mistress of the mansion she now occupied. Belgrave was ignorant of the violence of her temper, and had no idea she would disobey his orders, and gave Amanda particularly into her charge.

But scarcely had he departed ere she swore, "that the vile wretch he had brought into the house to insult her, should never remain in it; she shall tramp," cried she, "though I follow her myself when he returns."

"Come, madam," said she, seizing Amanda's arm, and pulling her from the pillow, "march." "What do you mean?" cried Amanda, trembling at her inflamed countenance. "Why, I mean you shall quit this house directly. Come," continued she, turning to a maid, "and help me to conduct this fine lady to the hall-door." "Gracious heaven!" said Amanda, who by this time was dragged from the bed, "though I rejoice to quit the house, yet surely, surely," she cried, and her soul recoiled at the idea, "without a guide at this hour of the night, you will not turn me from it."

She then mentioned Belgrave's having deprived her of her purse and watch, and besought the woman to lend her a small sum, till she reached her friends, and she would depart with gratitude and joy.

"Such madams as you," replied the imperious woman, "are never at a loss for procuring money nor a place to go to."

So saying, she rudely seized Amanda, and assisted by another woman, hurried her down stairs, and carried her to an intricate part of the wood, and left the helpless mourner leaning against a tree.

Amanda looked round her ; dark and awful were the shades of the wood : “ have mercy upon me heaven ! ” she groaned, and sunk to the earth. The cold almost immediately revived her. She rested her head against a little bank, and as she thus reclined, a tender sadness pervaded her soul at the idea of her father’s sorrow when he heard of her fate. “ When he hears,” cried she, “ that I was driven from the house, as unworthy of pity or protection from any being ; and that his Amanda perished without shelter, it will break his heart entirely. Poor Oscar, too, alas ! I shall be a source of wretchedness to both. Will Lord Mortimer lament when he hears of my fate ? Alas ! I cannot hope that he will : he that could leave me in the arms of insensibility, and so readily believe ill of me, must have a heart steeled against compassion for my sufferings. But my unhappy father and brother will never doubt my innocence, and will tenderly mourn me.”

As she reflected, she could not but attribute her expulsion from the house of infamy, to Providence : and whilst her heart swelled with gratitude, her fortitude gradually returned. She arose, but the vigour of her nerves was not equal to her intentions. After wandering about a considerable time, she began to think that she had penetrated into the very centre of the wood, and that to quit it would be impossible till the morning. Yielding to her excessive weariness, she was seeking a place to sit down on, when a faint light glimmered before her. She instantly darted through the path from whence it gleamed, and found it proceeded from a small hamlet contiguous to the wood. A profound stillness reigned around, which convinced Amanda every cottage was closed for the night ; “ and were they open,” said

she, "I should perhaps be denied access to any, deprived as I am of the means of rewarding kindness." She shuddered at the idea of passing a night unsheltered. She moved slowly on, and had nearly reached the end of the hamlet, when before a neat cottage, she saw a venerable old man, whose eyes were raised with a tender melancholy to heaven. Surely such a being, thought she, will pity me. She approached him, yet was unnoticed. Thrice she attempted to speak, and thrice her heart failed her; at last she summoned all her courage to her aid, and faintly articulated, "Pity—" she could add no more, but fainted at his feet. The stranger's mind was fraught with benevolence. He called to his servant, an elderly woman, his only companion in the cottage, to assist him in carrying her in.

She was supported to a small chamber, the old woman undressed her, put her to bed, and sat up with her the remainder of the night. Amanda continually raved of Belgrave. She mentioned the cruelty of the Marchioness, and called upon her father to save her from destruction, and reproached Mortimer, for aiding to overwhelm her with disgrace. She continued in this state three days; during which the old man and his faithful servant watched her with unremitted attention.

The afternoon of the third day, Amanda awoke perfectly restored to her senses; it was many minutes, however, ere she recollected all the circumstances that had caused her present situation.

She at last opened the curtain, and perceived the old woman, whom we shall henceforth call Eleanor.

"I fear," said she, "I have caused you a great deal of trouble." "No, no," replied the kind Eleanor, delighted to hear her speak so calmly. "Heaven, my dear child, was kind to you, in throwing you in my master's way, who delights in befriending the helpless."

"Heaven will reward him," exclaimed Amanda.

She was impatient to express her gratitude to him, and the next day, she trusted, would give her an opportunity of doing so, as she then resolved, if possible, to rise. The wish of her soul was to be with her father, ere he could receive any intimation of what had happened. She resolved to communicate to her benevolent host, the incidents which had placed her in such a situation : and she flattered herself, on hearing them, he would accommodate her with the means of returning to Ireland.

She rose the next day, and sent to request Mr. Howel's company. Eleanor had told her her master's name.

The old man appeared. When he beheld the pale face of Amanda beaming with angelic sweetness ; when he saw her emaciated hand extended towards him, while her soft voice uttered her grateful acknowledgments, his emotions could not be suppressed : he pressed her hand between his, and tears rolled down the furrows of his face.

Amanda gave him a brief account of her father, and the events of her life.

" Ah ! my dear," cried the old man, as she finished her narrative, " you have reason, indeed, to regret your knowledge of Belgrave, but the sorrow he has occasioned you, I believe, and trust, will be but transient : that which he has given me, will be lasting as my life.—You look astonished:—alas ! but for him, I might now have been blest with a daughter as lovely and as amiable as Fitzalan's. I see you are too delicate to express the curiosity my words have excited, but I shall not hesitate to gratify it."

Amanda shed tears of soft compassion as she listened to the tale, Howel told her, of Belgrave's treachery, and felt, if possible, her gratitude to heaven increased, for preserving her from the snares of such a monster of deceit and barbarity.

Howel relieved her anxiety about the means of returning home, by assuring her he would not only

supply her with a sum sufficient for that purpose, but see her to Park gate himself.

His name struck Amanda: it recalled to remembrance her Welch friend. She enquired, and heard, that the young and tender curate was indeed the son of her benefactor.

One day was all Amanda would devote to the purpose of recruiting her strength; nothing could prevail on her longer to defer her journey. A chaise was accordingly procured, into which, at the first dawn of day, she and Howel stepped, followed by the blessings of the affectionate Eleanor, who, from her own wardrobe, had supplied Amanda with a few necessaries.

The weakness of Amanda would not allow them to travel expeditiously. They slept one night on the road, and the next day, to her great joy, arrived at Park gate, as she had all along dreaded a pursuit from Belgrave. A packet was to sail at four o'clock in the afternoon: she partook of a slight repast with her benevolent friend, who attended her to the boat, and with starting tears gave and received an adieu.

CHAPTER XXIX.

The breezy call of incense breathing morn;

The swallow twittering from its straw-built shed;

The cock's shrill clarion, or the echoing horn,

No more shall rouse him from his lowly bed. *Gray.*

THE weakness which Amanda felt in consequence of her late illness, made her retire to bed immediately on entering the packet, where she continued till the evening of the second day, when about five o'clock, she was landed at the Marine hotel. She immediately sent and secured a place in the northern mail coach. At eleven o'clock she set out, and the second evening, about eight o'clock, she arrived at the nearest town to Castle Carberry, for which she directly procured a chaise and set off.

Her spirits were painfully agitated: she feared the shock her father would receive from hearing of her sufferings, which it would be impossible to conceal from him. She felt extremely ill. She longed for rest and quite, and trusted and believed these would conquer her malady.

The chaise stopped at the entrance of the lawn, as she wished to have her father prepared for her arrival by one of the servants. She knocked at the door with an unsteady hand; some minutes elapsed and no one appeared, neither could she perceive a ray of light from any of the windows: the wind blew the rain directly in her face. She recollected a small door at the back of the castle: she walked feebly to this, and found it open. She proceeded through a long dark passage, till she came to the kitchen: here she found the old woman sitting (to whom the care of the castle was usually consigned) before a large turf fire. On hearing a footstep, she looked behind and saw Amanda.

“My father is well, I hope?” said Amanda.

“Do you know nothing at all, my dear jewel,” said Kate, “of what has happened at the castle since you went away?” “No, nothing in the world.” “Heaven help you then,” said Kate. “I will tell you all about it. You must know, about three weeks ago, my Johnaten brought the captain a letter; he knew by the mark it was a letter from England. Well, as soon as I thought he had read it, I goes to the parlour, and walked in. ‘Well, sir,’ says I, ‘I hope there is good news from Miss.’

“‘This letter, my good Kate,’ says he, ‘is not from my daughter, but I am glad you are come, for I wanted to speak to you. I am going to leave the castle: I shall settle with the servants I hired, and discharge them.’ I was struck all of a heap, ‘the Lord forbid you should be going to leave us, sir,’ says I.’ The Captain got up: he walked to the window: he sighed heavily, and I saw a tear roll

down his cheek. He spoke to me again; so with a heavy heart, I went and told my Johnaten the sad tidings.

“Well, the Captain came out to us, and said he was to be Lord Cherbury’s agent no longer: and said he must set off for England the next day; but in the middle of the night he was seized with spasms in his stomach; he thought himself dying, and at last rang the bell, my Johnaten heard it, and went up to him: I had a choice bottle of old brandy by me, so I heated a cup, and gave it to him. He grew a little easier, but was too bad in the morning to proceed on his journey. He got up, however, and wrote a large packet, which he sent by Johnaten to the post office: he said he would not stay in the castle on any account, so he went out, leaning upon Johnaten’s arm, and got a lodging at Thady Bryne’s cabin.” “Merciful heaven!” exclaimed the agonized and almost fainting Amanda.

“Alack-a-day,” said the good natured Kate, “cheer up, I will give you some nice hot potatoes for your supper, and by the time you have eaten it, Johnaten may perhaps come back, and then I will go with you to Thady’s myself.”

“No, no,” cried Amanda, “every moment I now stay from my father, seems an age.” The agonies of suspense she endured till she saw him made her regardless of walking alone. Ill, weak, and dispirited, she had flattered herself, on returning to her father, she should receive relief, support, and consolation: instead of which, heart-broken as she was, she found she must give, or at least attempt giving them herself.

The violence of the storm had increased, but it was slight in comparison of that which agitated the bosom of Amanda. She had about half a mile to walk, through a rugged road. She knew the people with whom her father lodged: they were of the lowest order, and on her first arrival at Castle Carberry,

in extreme distress, from which she had relieved them. Wretched as was their cabin, she was glad when she reached it: it was but a few yards from the beach. Amanda feared her suddenly appearing before her father, in his present weak state, might have a dangerous effect upon him: she therefore tapped gently at the door, and then retreated a few steps from it, shivering with the wet and cold. The door was opened by a boy, whom she knew to be the son of the poor people. She beckoned him to her, and inquired for her father, and heard he was ill, and then asleep. She followed the boy cautiously into the cabin: it was small and crowded: half the family slept below, and the other half upon a loft, to which they ascended by a ladder, and upon which a number of fowls were now familiarly roosting, cackling at every noise made below. Fitzalan's room was divided from the rest of the cabin by a thin partition of wood, plastered with pictures of saints and crosses.

"Save you kindly, madam," said the mistress of the mansion to Amanda on entering it.

Bryne got up, and with many scrapes, offered her his little stool before the fire: she thanked him and accepted it. His wife, notwithstanding the obligations she lay under to her, seemed to think as much respect was not due to her as when mistress of the castle, and therefore never left her seat, or quitted spinning, on her entrance.

"My poor father is very ill then?" said Amanda. "Why, indeed the captain has had a bad time of it," answered Mrs. Bryne, jogging her wheel: "to be sure he has suffered some little change: but your great folks, as well as your simple, must look for that in this world: and I don't know why they should not, for they are not better than the others, I believe."

Amanda's heart was surcharged with grief, she felt suffocating, and asked for a glass of water: a glass was not readily to be procured. Bryne told

her she had better take a noggin of butter-milk. This she refused, and he brought her one of water.

Amanda wished to see her father whilst he was asleep, to judge how far his illness had affected him, she stept softly into the room: it was small and low, lighted by a glimmering rush-light and a declining fire. In one corner stood a bedstead, without curtains, or any shade, and on this, under miserable bed-clothes, lay poor Fitzalan.

Amanda shuddered as she looked round this chamber of wretchedness. She went to the bed, and beheld his face: it was deadly pale and emaciated: he moaned in his sleep, as if his mind was dreadfully oppressed. Suddenly he began to move: he sighed. "Amanda, my dearest child, shall I never more behold you?"

Amanda hastened from the room, to give vent to her emotions.

They soon after heard him stir; she requested Mrs. Bryne to go in, and cautiously inform him she was come. She complied, and in a moment Amanda heard him say, "Thank heaven, my darling is returned." "You may go in, Miss," said Mrs. Bryne, coming from the room.

Amanda went in: her father was raised in the bed; his arms were extended to receive her: language was denied them both, but their tears evinced their feelings. Fitzalan was the first to recover his voice. "My prayer," said he, "is granted: heaven has restored my child to smooth the pillow of sickness, and sooth the last moments of existence." "Oh, my father," cried Amanda, "have pity on me, and mention not those moments: exert yourself for your child: who in this wide world, has she but thee, to comfort, support, and befriend her?" "Indeed," said he, "for your sake, may they be far distant."

He held her a little distance from him; her form, her fallen features, appeared to shock him. "The world, my child, I fear," cried he, "has used thee

most unkindly." "Oh most cruelly," sobbed Amanda. "Then, my girl, let the reflection of that world, where innocence and virtue will meet a proper reward, console thee. Though a soldier from my youth, and accustomed to the licentiousness of camps, I never forgot my Creator, and I now find the benefit of not having done so: now when my friends desert, the world frowns upon me, when sorrow and sickness overwhelm me, religion stands me in good stead, by presenting prospects of future brightness."

So spoke Fitzalan the pious sentiments of his soul, and they calmed the emotions of Amanda. He found her clothes were wet, and he made her change them. In the bundle the good Eleanor gave her, was a cotton wrapper, which she now put on, in a small closet or rather shed, adjoining her father's room. A good fire was made up, and some bread and wine from a small cupboard in the room, which contained Fitzalan's things, set before her, of which he made her partake. He took a glass of wine himself from her, and tried to cheer her spirits. "He had been daily expecting her arrival," he said, "and had had a pallet and bed clothes kept airing for her; he hoped she would not be dissatisfied with sleeping in the closet." "Ah! my father," she cried, "can you ask your daughter such a question?"

Lord Cherbury, he informed her, had written him a letter, which pierced him to the soul. "He accused me," said he, "of endeavouring to promote a marriage between you and Lord Mortimer: of treacherously trying to counteract his views, and taking advantage of his unsuspecting friendship. My accounts were always in a state to allow me to resign at a moment's warning. It was my intention to go to England, put them in Lord Cherbury's hands, and take my Amanda from a place where she might meet with indignities as little merited by her, as those her father had received, were by him. A sudden and dreadful disorder, which I am convinced the

agitation of my mind brought on, prevented my executing this intention. I wrote, however, to his lordship, acquainting him with my resignation of his agency, and transmitting my accounts and arrears. I sent a letter to you at the same time, with a small remittance for your immediate return, and then retired from the castle: for I felt a longer continuance in it would degrade me to the character of a mean dependant, and intimate a hope of being reinstated in my former station.

Amanda perceived her father knew nothing of her sufferings, but supposed her return occasioned by his letter: she therefore resolved, if possible, not to undeceive him, at least till his health was better.

The night was far advanced, and her father who saw her ill, and almost sinking with fatigue, requested her to retire to her bed in the little closet.

Her rest, however, was far from comfortable: she felt extremely ill, her bones were sore from the violent shaking of the carriage, and she fancied rest would do her good; but when towards morning, she was inclined to take some, she was completely prevented by the noise the children made in rising. Fearful of neglecting her father, she rose soon after herself; but was scarcely able to put on her clothes, from excessive weakness. She found him in bed, but awake.

He made her sit down by him: he gazed on her with unutterable tenderness.

The kettle was already boiling: he had procured a few necessaries for himself, such as tea-things and glasses. Amanda placed the tea-table by the bed, and gave him his breakfast. After breakfast he said he would rise, and Amanda retired into the garden. The spring was already advanced; the day was fine, and the sky, almost as far as the eye could reach, was of a clear blue.

But neither the season nor its charms could now, as heretofore, delight Amanda: she felt forlorn and

disconsolate; deprived of the comforts of life, and no longer interested in the objects about her, she sat down upon a stone at the end of the garden, and she thought the fresh breeze from the sea cooled the feverish heat of her blood.

She recollected the words which had escaped her when she last saw Tudor-Hall, and she thought they were dictated by something like a prophetic spirit. She had then said, as she leaned upon a little gate which looked into the domain, "When the glow of vegetation again revives, when the blossoms and flowers again spread their foliage to the sun, alas! where will Amanda be? far distant, in all probability, from these delightful shades: perhaps deserted and forgotten by their master."

She was indeed far distant from them; deserted, and if not forgotten, at least only remembered with contempt by their master—remembered with contempt by Lord Mortimer. It was an idea of intolerable anguish; his name was no more repeated as a charm to sooth her grief: this idea increased her misery.

She continued indulging her melancholy meditations till informed the captain was ready to receive her. She hastened in, and found him in an old high-backed chair, and the ravages of care and sickness were now more visible to her than they had been the night before—he was reduced to a mere skeleton, and seemed already on the very brink of the grave. The agony of Amanda's feelings was expressed in her countenance: she mentioned a physician; he tried to dissuade her, but at last, overcome by her tenderness, he promised the ensuing day she should do as she wished.

It was now Sunday, and he desired to have the service for the day read. A small Bible lay on the table before him, and Amanda complied with his desire.

In the first lesson were these words, "Leave thy fatherless children to me, and I will be their father."

Tears gushed from Fitzalan: he laid his hand on the book;—"Oh! what words of comfort!" cried he, "are these; what transport do they convey to the heart of a parent burthened with anxiety?—yes, merciful Power, I will, with grateful joy, commit my children to thy care, for thou art the friend who will never forsake them." He desired Amanda to proceed: when she had concluded, he drew her towards him, and enquired into all that had passed during her stay in London. The remembrance of the dreadful scenes she had gone through at the Marchioness' made her involuntarily shudder, and she wished to conceal them for ever from her father, but found it impossible to evade his minute and earnest inquiries.

"Gracious heaven!" said he, on hearing them "what complicated cruelty and deceit! inhuman monsters! to have no pity on one so young, so innocent, and so helpless.

He gave her a note to discharge her debt to Howel: she feared he inconvenienced himself by parting with it, but he assured her he could very well spare it, as he had been an economist, and had still sufficient money to support them a few months longer in their present situation.

Amanda now enquired when he had heard from her brother.

"Alas! poor Oscar," exclaimed Fitzalan, "he has not been exempt from his portion of distress."

He took a letter from his pocket-book, and presented it to Amanda, who read as follows:

"My dear father,

"Particular circumstances prevented my answering your last letter as soon as I could have wished, and indeed, the intelligence I have to communicate, makes me almost averse to write at all. I have long had a powerful enemy to cope with, and it will, no doubt, surprise you to hear, that that enemy is Colonel Belgrave. An interference in the cause of suf-

fering humanity provoked his insolence and malignity: neither his words nor looks were bearable, and I was irritated by them to send him a challenge. I was, by his order, put under immediate arrest. A court-martial was held, and I was broke, for disrespect to a superior officer: but it was imagined by the whole corps, I should have been restored. I have already settled on the course I shall pursue, and ere this letter reaches you, I shall have quitted my native kingdom. Blessed as I am with youth, health, and fortitude, I have no doubt but I shall make my way through the rugged path of life extremely well. A parting visit I avoided, from the certainty of its being painful to us both. I shall write as soon as I reach my place of destination. I rejoice to hear Amanda is so happily situated with Lady Greystock. Farewell, my dear father, and be assured, with unabated respect and gratitude, I subjoin myself your affectionate son,

Oscar Fitzalan."

This letter was a cruel shock to Amanda: she hoped to have procured her brother's company, and that her father's melancholy, and her own, would have been alleviated by it. Sensible of the difficulties Oscar must undergo, without friends or fortune, the tears stole down her cheeks, and she almost dreaded she should no more behold him.

Johnaten and Kate called in the course of the day, to know if they could be of any service to Fitzalan; Amanda engaged Johnaten to go to town the next morning for a physician, and gave Kate the key of a wardrobe where she had left some things, which she desired her to pack up, and send to the cabin in the evening.

Johnaten was punctual in obeying Amanda's commands, and brought a physician the next morning to the cabin.

She withdrew from the room soon after the physician had entered it, and when he came out, she asked,

with a faltering voice, his opinion, and besought him not to deceive her.

He shook his head, and assured her he would not deviate from the truth for the world; "the captain was, indeed, in a ticklish situation," he said, "but the medicines he had ordered, and sea-bathing, he doubted not, would set all to rights."

Four days passed heavily away, and the assurance of the physician, who was punctual in his attendance, lost their effect upon Amanda.

Her father was considerably altered for the worse, and unable to rise, except for a few minutes in the evening, to have his bed made. He complained of no pain or sickness, but seemed sinking beneath an easy and gradual decay. It was only at intervals he could converse with his daughter. He charged her to avoid any further intimacy with Lord Mortimer, as an essential measure for the restoration of her peace, the preservation of her fame, and the removal of Lord Cherbury's unjust suspicions, "who will find at last," continued he, "how much he wronged me, and may, perhaps, feel compunction when beyond his power to make reparation."

A week passed away in this manner at the cabin, a week of wretchedness to Amanda, who perceived her father growing weaker and weaker.

She assisted him, as usual, to rise one evening for a few minutes; when dressed he complained of a difficulty in breathing, and desired to be supported to the air. Amanda, with difficulty, led him to the window, which she opened, and seated him by it, then knelt before him, and putting her arms round his waist, fastened her eyes with tenderness upon his face.

The evening was serenely fine: and the sea, illuminated by the parting beams of the setting sun, looked like a sheet of burnished gold.

"What a lovely scene," cried Fitzalan, "with what majesty does the sun retire from the world! the

calmness which attends his departure is such, I think, as must attend the exit of a good man." He paused for a few minutes, then raising his eyes to heaven, exclaimed, "Merciful Power! had it pleased thee, I could have wished yet a little longer to have been spared to this young creature; but thy will, not mine, be done! confiding in thy mercy, I leave her with some degree of fortitude."

Amanda's tears began to flow as he spoke: he raised his hands on which they fell, and kissing them off, exclaimed, "Precious drops; my Amanda, weep not too bitterly for me, like a weary traveller, think that rest must now be acceptable to me."

He appeared exhausted by speaking, and Amanda assisted him to lie down, entreating him at the same time to take some drops. He consented, and while she was pouring them out at a little table, with her back to the bed, she heard a deep groan; the bottle dropped from her hand, she sprang to the bed and perceived her father lying senseless on the pillow, she imagined he had fainted, and screamed out for assistance.

The woman of the cabin, her husband, and mother, all rushed into the room. He was raised up, and his temples and hands chafed, but all in vain: his spirit had forsaken its tenement of clay for ever.

Amanda when convinced of this, wrung her hands together; then suddenly clasped the lifeless body to her breast, and sunk fainting beside it.

She remained a considerable time in a state of insensibility, and, when she recovered, found herself in a bed, laid on the floor in the outside room; she saw some one sitting by her: she raised herself a little, and perceived sister Mary.

Sister Mary told her she had never heard of her return, till Mrs. Bryne came to St. Catherine's for a few sprigs of rosemary to strew over the poor captain; she then returned with her to the cabin to try if she could be of any service, and to invite her, in

the name of the prioress and the whole sisterhood, to the convent.

Amanda thanked her for her kind invitation, which she said, she must decline accepting for a few days, till she had performed all her duties; which she added, "the grave would soon terminate:" she was sorry, she said, that they had undressed her, and requested sister Mary to assist her in putting on her clothes. The sister tried to dissuade her from this, but soon found she was determined to spend the remainder of the night in her father's apartment. She accordingly dressed her, and made her take a glass of wine and water ere she suffered her to approach the door. Amanda was astonished as she approached it, to hear a violent noise, like the mingled sounds of laughing and singing: her soul recoiled at the tumult, and she asked sister Mary, with a countenance full of terror, what it meant. She replied, "it was only some friends and neighbours doing honor to the captain." Amanda hastily opened the door, anxious to terminate the suspense these words had occasioned: but how great was her horror when she perceived a set of the meanest rustics assembled round the bed, with every appearance of inebriety, laughing, shouting, and smoaking: what a savage scene for a child whose heart was bursting with grief; she shrieked with horror, and flinging herself into the arms of sister Mary conjured her to have the room cleared.

They began to grumble at the proposal of removing, they had made preparations for spending a merry night, and Mrs. Bryne said, "if she had thought things would have turned out in this way, the captain might have found some other place to die in—for the least one could have, after his giving them so much trouble, was a little enjoyment with one's neighbours at the latter end." They at length retired, and sister Mary and Amanda were left alone in the chamber of death. Amanda now indulged in all the luxury of grief, and found in sister Mary a truly sympathetic

friend. She obtained a promise from Amanda of accompanying her to St. Catherine's as soon as her father was interred, and in return for this gave an assurance of continuing with her till the last melancholy offices were over, and also, that with the assistance of Johnaten, she would see every thing proper provided. This was some comfort to Amanda, who felt herself at present unequal to any exertion; yet, notwithstanding her fatigue and illness, she persevered in her resolution of sitting up with her father every night. The evening of the fourth day after his decease was fixed upon for his interment; with streaming eyes and a breaking heart, Amanda beheld him put into the coffin, and in that moment felt as if he had died again before her. A small procession attended, consisting of the people of the house, Johnaten and Kate, and a few respectable farmers, to whom Fitzalan had endeared himself during his short abode at Castle Carberry.

Johnaten, who had been a soldier in his youth, resolved to pay him some military honours, and placed his hat and sword upon the coffin. Amanda by the most painful efforts, supported the preparations for his removal: but when she saw the coffin actually raised to be taken out, she could no longer restrain her feelings: she shrieked in the agony of her soul, a sickness, almost deadly, seized her, and she fell fainting upon sister Mary's bosom.

CHAPTER XXX.

Oh! let me unlade my breast,
 Pour out the fullness of my soul before you,
 Shew every tender, every grateful thought
 This wond'rous goodness stirs: but 'tis impossible,
 And utterance all is vile: since I can only
 Swear you reign here, but never tell how much. *Rowe.*

SISTER Mary recovered her with difficulty, but found it impossible to remove her from the cabin till she

was more composed. In about two hours its inhabitants returned, and the car having arrived, which she had ordered to convey Amanda to St. Catherine's, she was placed upon it in a state scarcely animate, and, supported by sister Mary, was conveyed to that peaceful asylum.

On arriving at it, she was carried immediately into the prioress' chamber, who welcomed her with the most tender affection and sensibility. Amanda declined going to bed, but laid down on a couch in the prioress' room.

She arrived on the eve of their patron saint at the convent. After tea, therefore, the prioress and sister Mary were compelled to repair to the chapel, but she removed the reluctance they felt to leave her alone by complaining of being drowsy, and soon after they quitted her she fell into a profound slumber, in which she continued till awoke by distant music, so soft, so clear, so harmonious, that the delightful sensations it gave her she could only compare to those which she imagined a distressed and pensive soul would feel when it first heard the heavenly sound that welcomed it to the realms of bliss.

It is a foretaste of heaven, thought Amanda. She heard a deep sigh behind her. She turned her head hastily, and perceived a figure standing near, which bore a strong resemblance to Lord Mortimer. She was alarmed,—she could not believe it was he. The light was imperfect, and she rose from the couch to be better assured whether it were or were not he: a second glimpse convinced her.

Trembling and astonished, she sank upon a seat, exclaiming, "Gracious heaven! what can have brought Lord Mortimer hither?"

He made no reply, but kneeling before her, took her hands in his, pressed them to his forehead and lips, and laid his head upon them.

"Why," cried Amanda, unutterably affected by the emotions he betrayed, "why my lord, are you

come hither?" "To try," he replied in a voice scarcely articulate, "whether Miss Fitzalan will yet consider me as her friend." "That, my lord," said she, "depends upon circumstances: but while your lordship remains in your present position, what they are I cannot explain."

Lord Mortimer instantly arose. "Now tell me," said he, "what those circumstances are." "The first, my Lord, is to exculpate my father in the opinion of Lord Cherbury, and by declaring the commencement and progress of our acquaintance, eradicate from his lordship's mind the injurious suspicions he entertained against him. Oh, my Lord, the second circumstance I allude to, is, if you should hear my name treated with scorn and contempt by those few, those very few, whom I had reason to esteem, and to believe, esteemed me, that you would kindly interpose in my justification, and say, I merited not the aspersions cast upon me. You shake your head as much as to say you cannot think me innocent after the proofs you have seen to the contrary. Ah! my Lord those proofs were contrived by malice and treachery to ruin me in the estimation of my friends. Surely in this solemn hour which has seen my beloved father consigned to his kindred earth, when with a mind harrassed by sorrow, and a body worn out with fatigue, I feel as if standing on the verge of the grave, I should be the most abandoned of wretches, if I could assert my innocence without the consciousness of really possessing it." "Oh Amanda!" cried Lord Mortimer, "you would almost convince me against the evidence of my own senses." "Almost!" repeated she, "then, I see, my Lord, you are determined still to disbelieve me, but why, since so prejudiced against me, have you come hither, was it merely to be assured of my wretchedness?" "No, no," exclaimed Lord Mortimer, flinging himself at her feet, "I do not, I cannot believe you would deceive me. There is an irresistible

eloquence in your words, that convinces me you have been the victim of treachery, and I its dupe. I cannot give you a more convincing proof of my confidence in you, than by again renewing my entreaties to have one fame, one fate, and one fortune ours."

In broken accents Amanda endeavoured to convince him that all further intimacy between them must now be terminated; and desired him to rise, but he refused till he was forgiven. "My forgiveness is yours indeed, my Lord," said she, "though your suspicions wounded me to the soul: I can scarcely wonder at your entertaining them, when I reflect on the different situations in which I was found, which if your lordship can spare a little longer time, or deem it worth devoting to such a purpose, as well as I am able I will account for being involved in."

She then briefly informed him of her father's residing in Devonshire after the death of her mother, of the manner in which they became acquainted with Colonel Belgrave, and of his having plunged them in distress.

She then related the cold and insolent reception she met with from the Marchioness and her daughter, when introduced by Lady Greystock; the enmity the Marchioness bore her father, the sudden alteration in her behaviour, the invitation to her house so unexpected and unnecessary, all tended to inspire a belief that she was concerned in contriving Belgrave's admittance to the house.

Lord Mortimer here interrupted Amanda, to mention the conversation which passed between him and Mrs. Jane in the hall, what Lady Greystock had told him concerning Mrs. Jennings, as also what the housekeeper had said of the note he gave her for Amanda.

"Good God!" said Amanda, "when I hear of all the enemies I had, I almost wonder I escaped so well."

She then resumed her narrative, and explained the

way in which she was entrapped into Colonel Belgrave's power, the friendship she received from Howel, the situation she arrived at Castle Carberry in, and found her father. The closing scene she could not describe, for sighs and sobs impeded her utterance. Lord Mortimer gently folded her to his breast, and declared he would never again quit her till she had given him a right to espouse her quarrels. Her warm tears wet his cheek as she exclaimed, "that could never be."

"My promise is already past," cried she, "that which was given to the living shall not be forfeited to the dead: and this, my Lord, by design, is the last time we must ever meet." "What promise!" exclaimed Lord Mortimer; "surely no one could be so inhuman as to extort a promise from you to give me up." "It was not inhumanity extorted it," replied Amanda, "but honour, rectitude, and discretion. There is but one event which could make me acquiesce in your wishes, that is, having a fortune adequate to yours to bring you, because then Lord Cherbury could ascribe no selfish motive to my conduct: but as such an event is utterly improbable, I might say impossible, it is certain we shall never be united."

Lord Mortimer was affected by the manner in which she spoke, and he was again declaring he would not suffer her to sacrifice happiness at the shrine of a too scrupulous and romantic generosity, when the door opened, and the prioress and sister Mary entered, bearing lights.

Lord Mortimer started in much confusion, and retreated to the window to hide his emotions: in a few minutes he recovered his composure, and apologized to the prioress for his intrusion in her apartment; but said he had the honour of being a friend of Miss Fitzalan's, and could not resist his wish of enquiring in person after her health, as soon as he arrived in the country.

The prioress, who had once seen a good deal of the polite world, received his address with ease and complaisance. The lights now gave Lord Mortimer an opportunity of contemplating the depredations which grief and sickness had made upon Amanda, "Gracious heaven!" cried he, going to the couch, and taking her hand, "I fear you are very ill."

She looked mournfully in his face without speaking: but this look was sufficient to convince him he was not mistaken. "She is very bad indeed," said sister Mary, "and we must get her to bed as soon as possible." "She requires rest and repose indeed," said Lord Mortimer: "but tell me, my dear Miss Fitzalan (taking her hand) if I have these good ladies permission to call here to-morrow, will you, if able to rise, see me?" "I cannot indeed," said Amanda. "I have already declared this must be our last interview, and I shall not retract from what I have said." "Then, exclaimed Lord Mortimer, regardless, or rather forgetful of those who heard him, "I shall in one respect, at least, accuse you of dissimulation, that of feigning a regard for me you never felt." "Such an accusation is now of little consequence," replied Amanda, "perhaps you had better think it just." "Cruel, inexorable girl, to refuse seeing me, to wish to have the anxiety which now preys upon my heart prolonged."

He took up his hat, he approached the door; but when he glanced at Amanda, he could not depart without speaking to her, and again went to the couch.

He entreated her to compose herself: he desired her forgiveness for any warmth he had betrayed, and he whispered to her that all his earthly happiness depended upon her restoration to health, and her becoming his. He insisted upon her now giving him her hand as a pledge of amity between them. She complied: but when presuming on this, he again asked her consent to repeat his visits, he found her

inexorable as ever, and he retired, if not with a displeased, a disappointed countenance.

A little room, inside the prioress' chamber, was prepared for Amanda, into which she was now conveyed, and the good-natured sister Mary brought her own bed, and laid it beside hers.

CHAPTER XXXI.

With dirges due, and sad array,
Slow through the church-way path, I saw him borne.

IT will now be necessary to account for the sudden appearance of Lord Mortimer. Our reader may recollect, that we left him in London in the deepest affliction for the supposed perfidy of Amanda: he pined in thought, and felt a distaste for all society: he at last began to think, that though Amanda had been unhappily led astray, she might, ere this, have repented of her error, and forsaken Colonel Belgrave: to know whether she had done so, or whether she could be prevailed upon to give him up, he believed would be an alleviation of his sorrow.

He told Lord Cherbury he thought an excursion into Wales would be of service to him: his lordship agreed in thinking it might.

Lord Mortimer travelled with as much expedition to Holyhead, as if certain that perfect happiness, not a small alleviation of misery, would be the recompense of his journey.

When he crossed the water he again set off post: within one mile of Castle Carberry he met the little mournful procession approaching, which was attending poor Fitzalan to his last home. The carriage stopped to let them pass, and in the last of the group he perceived Johnaten, who at the same moment, recognised him; and stepping up to the carriage, with a melancholy shake of the head, informed him whose remains he was following.

“Captain Fitzalan dead!” repeated Lord Mortimer.

mer, with a face as pale as death, and a faltering voice. "Had he no tender friend about him; was neither of his children with him?" "Oh, yes, my Lord, poor Miss Amanda." "She was with him!" said Lord Mortimer, in an eager accent.

"Yes, my Lord, she returned here about ten days ago, but so sadly altered, I think she won't stay long behind him, poor thing she is going fast indeed."

Lord Mortimer was inexpressibly shocked; he wished to hide his emotions, and waved his hand for Johnaten to depart.

The return of Amanda was to him a conviction that she had seen her error in its true light.

He heard she was dying; his soul recoiled at the idea of seeing her shrouded in her native clay, and yet he could not help believing this the only peaceful asylum she could find to be freed from the shafts of contempt and malice of the world. He trembled lest he should not behold the lovely penitent while she was capable of observing him: to receive a last adieu, though dreadful, would yet, he thought, lighten the horrors of an eternal separation. He had heard from Lord Cherbury, that Captain Fitzalan had quitted the castle: he knew not therefore, at present, where to find Amanda, nor did he choose to make any enquiries till he again saw Johnaten.

As soon as the procession was out of sight, he alighted from the carriage, and took a path across the fields, which brought him to the side of the church yard where Fitzalan was to be interred.

He reached it just as the coffin was lowering into the earth: a yew tree growing by the wall, hid him from observation. He saw Johnaten receiving the hat and sword, with a flood of tears.

When the church-yard was cleared, he stepped across the broken wall to the silent mansion of Fitzalan: the scene was dreary and wild, and a lowering evening seemed in unison with the sad objects around.

“Peace to thy shade, thou unfortunate soldier,” exclaimed Lord Mortimer, after standing by the grave some time with folded arms; “peace to thy shade, which shall reward thee for a life of trouble and toil; thy Amanda, and thy gallant son, shall be my care, and his path, I trust, it will be in my power to smooth through life.”

A tear fell from Lord Mortimer upon the grave, and he turned mournfully from it towards Castle Carberry. Here Johnaten had arrived before him.

He now learned Amanda’s residence, and apprehensive the convent would soon be closed, he set off, fatigued as he was, without recruiting himself with any refreshment.

After rapping repeatedly with a rattan against the door of the convent, a servant girl appeared. From her he learned that Miss Fitzalan was in the prioress’ apartment. He asked, “was she too ill to be seen.” The girl replied, “No,” for having only entered the room to leave the kettle in it, at a time when Amanda was composed, she imagined she was very well.

Lord Mortimer then told his name, and desired her to enquire whether Miss Fitzalan would see him. The girl attempted not to move: she was so surprised, by hearing she had been talking to a lord. Lord Mortimer imputing her silence to disinclination to comply with his request, put a guinea in her hand, and entreated her to be expeditious. This restored her animation; but ere she reached the room she forgot his title, and returned to him, pretending to have delivered his message, and that he might go up. When he entered, he imputed the silence of Amanda, and her not moving, to the effects of grief: he advanced to the couch, and was not a little shocked on seeing her eyes closed: concluding from this she had fainted, but her easy respiration soon convinced him that this was a mistake, and he immediately concluded that the girl had deceived him.

What took place in the interview between them,

has already been related. He longed for the period of her triumphing over the perfidious Marchioness and the detestable Lady Euphrasia, by her being raised to that station they had so long attempted to prevent her attaining. He felt a degree of rapture at the idea of his being no longer obliged to regret the ardent, the unabated affection he felt for her.

His transports were somewhat checked when she solemnly declared an union between them impossible; but he could not now despair of any event after the unexpected restoration of Amanda to his esteem, and the revival of those hopes of felicity, which in the certainty of having lost her, had faded away.

He returned, as Johnaten said, an altered man to the castle. He resolved on an immediate union, as the surest proof he could give her of his perfect confidence in her sincerity, not allowing himself to suppose she would continue firm in the resolution she had recently avowed to him. He then intended setting off for London, and sparing neither time, trouble, nor expense, to obtain from the inferior agents in the plot laid against her, a full avowal of the part they had acted in it, and all they knew relative to that performed by others. This was not designed for his own satisfaction; it was to cover with confusion those who had meditated the destruction of Amanda. Such proofs of her innocence would also prevent malice from saying that he was the dupe of art, and he was convinced, for both their sakes, it was requisite to procure them: he would then avow his marriage, return for his wife, and introduce her to his friends. These delightful schemes kept him awake half the night.

In the morning, notwithstanding the prohibition he had received to the contrary, he went to enquire how Amanda was, and try to see her. Sister Mary told him that Miss Fitzalan was very bad, and declared that even if she were up she would not see him. "Indeed, I believe the poor thing likes you well

enough," continued she, "the more is her misfortune for doing so, I have just heard her tell the prioress a long story about you and herself, by which I find it was her father's desire she should have nothing more to say to you, and I dare say the poor gentleman had good reasons for doing so."

Lord Mortimer could not depart without an effort to win sister Mary over to his favour, and engage her to try and persuade Miss Fitzalan to permit his visits, but she was inflexible; he then entreated to know if Amanda were so ill as to be unable to rise. She assured him she was, and, as some little consolation for the distress, she perceived this assurance gave him, said he might send when he pleased to enquire after her health, and she would take care and answer the messenger herself.

Lord Mortimer began now to be seriously alarmed, lest Captain Fitzalan had prevailed on his daughter to make a solemn renunciation of him: if this were the case, he knew nothing could prevail on her to break her promise. He was half distracted with doubt and anxiety; and felt convinced of the instability of earthly happiness, and the close connection there has ever been between pleasure and pain.

CHAPTER XXXII.

"Thy presence only 'tis can make me blest,
Heal my unquiet mind, and cure my soul."

Obey.

THE fatigue, distress, and agitation of Amanda could no longer be struggled with; she sank beneath their violence, and for a week was confined to her bed. The whole sisterhood vied with each other in kindness and care to the poor invalid. Their efforts for her recovery were aided by a skilful physician from the next town, who called without been sent for, at the convent. He said he had known Captain Fitzalan, and that hearing Miss Fitzalan was indisposed, he

had come in hopes of being of service to the daughter of a man he so much esteemed. He would accept of no fee, and the prioress suspected, as well as Amanda, that he came by the directions of Lord Mortimer: nor were they mistaken, for distracted with apprehensions about her, he had taken this method of lightening his fears. The doctor did not withdraw his visits when Amanda was able to rise, but attended her punctually. In a few days she was removed from her chamber into a pleasant room below stairs, which opened into the garden, where, leaning on the friendly doctor's arm, or on one of the nun's, she walked a few minutes each day. Lord Mortimer, on hearing this, thought he might now solicit an interview, and accordingly wrote for that purpose.

To Miss Fitzalan.

“Lord Mortimer presents his compliments to Miss Fitzalan, and flatters himself she will allow him personally to express the sincere happiness her restoration to health affords him. He is almost convinced she would not hesitate a moment in granting his request, could she form an idea of the misery he has experienced, the anxiety he feels, and must continue to feel, till some expressions in the last interview are explained.”

Castle Carberry,
May 10th.

This letter greatly distressed Amanda. She had hoped the pain of again rejecting his visits and requests would have been spared her. She guessed at the expressions he alluded to in his letter, they were those she had dropped relative to her promise to her father, and from the impetuous and tender feelings of Lord Mortimer, she easily conceived the agony he would experience when he found this promise inviolable, she felt more for his distress than her own, and paid the tribute of tears to a love so fervent, so faithful, and so hopeless.

She then requested sister Mary to acquaint his messenger that she received no visits, and that, as she was tolerably recovered, she entreated his lordship would not take the trouble of continuing his enquiries about her health, or to send any more written messages, as she was unable to answer them.

The next morning the doctor called as usual. He told Amanda he had brought her an entertaining book; he did not present it to her till he was retiring; Amanda was alone, and immediately opened it. Great was her astonishment when a letter dropped from it into her lap. She snatched it up, and perceiving the direction in Lord Mortimer's hand, she hesitated whether she should open a letter conveyed in this manner; but to return it unopened was surely a slight Lord Mortimer merited not, and she broke the seal with a trembling hand and palpitating heart.

“Unkind Amanda, to compel me to use stratagems in writing to you, and destroy the delightful hopes which had sprung up in my soul, at the prospect of being about to receive a reward for my sufferings.

“You must be sensible of the anxiety I shall feel till your ambiguous expressions are fully explained, and yet you refuse this explanation! would it not be more generous in you to permit an interview than to keep me in suspense? Captain Fitzalan, hurt by the unfortunate letter he received from my father, extended his resentment to his son, and called upon you, without reflecting on the consequences of such a measure, to give me up. This is the only reason I can conceive for his desiring such a promise, and had I but arrived while he could have listened to my arguments, I am firmly convinced, instead of opposing, he would have sanctioned our union.

“Happiness, my dear Amanda, is in long arrears with us. She is now ready to make up for past deficiencies, if it is not your own fault.

“You will not, cannot, must not be inflexible: I shall expect, as soon as you read this, a summons to St. Catherine’s, to receive the ratification of my hopes: in every thing respecting our union I will be guided by you, except delaying it.

“Oh! Amanda, the faintest prospect of calling you mine, gives to my heart a felicity no language can express. Refuse not being mine, except you bring me an addition of fortune. Banish all uneasy doubts and scruples, my Amanda, from your mind, nor think a promise which was demanded without reflecting on the consequences which must attend it, can be binding: I make no doubt, if departed souls are permitted to view the transactions of this world, your father’s spirit would behold our union with approbation. Yes, my Amanda, I repeat, your father’s approving spirit will smile on an act which gives to his lovely and beloved orphan a faithful friend, and steady protector, in her adoring
Mortimer.”

Castle Carberry,
May 11 th.

This letter deeply affected the sensibility, but could not shake the resolution of Amanda. She would not have answered it, but from the agitation and warmth of his letter, it was evident to her that, if he did not receive an immediate answer to it, he would come to St. Catherine’s, and insist upon seeing her: she accordingly wrote as follows.

To Lord Mortimer.

“My Lord,—You cannot change my resolution; surely, when I solemnly declare to you it is unalterable, you will spare me any further impunity on so painful a subject. In vain, my Lord, would you, by sophistry, cloaked with tenderness for that purpose, try to influence me. The arguments you made use of, I am convinced, you never would have adopted, had you not been mistaken in regard to those motives

which prompted my father to ask a promise from me of declining any further connection with you: it was not from resentment, my lord, no, his death was then fast approaching, and he, in charity with all mankind, forgave those who had wounded him by unjust reproach and accusation; it was a proper respect for his own character, and not resentment, which influenced his conduct, as he was convinced, if I consented to an alliance with you, Lord Cherbury would be confirmed in all the suspicions he entertained of his having entangled you with me, and consequently load his memory with contempt: tenderness also for me actuated him: he was acquainted with the proud heart of Lord Cherbury, and knew, that if poor, and reduced as I was, I entered his family, I should be considered and treated as a mean intruder. Let not your lordship deem me either unkind or ungrateful; my heart disavows the justice of such an accusation, and is but too sensible of your tenderness and generosity. Yes, my lord, I will confess, that no pang can be more pungent to my heart than the one which now rends it, at being obliged to act against its feelings: but the greater the sacrifice, the greater the merit of submitting to it, and a ray of self-approbation is perhaps the only sunshine of the soul which will brighten my future days.

“Never, my lord, should I enjoy this, if my promise to my father was violated: there is but one circumstance which could set it aside, that is, having a fortune, that even Lord Cherbury might deem equivalent to your own, to bring you: for then my father has often said he would approve our union: but this is among the improbabilities of this life, and we must endeavour to reconcile ourselves to the destiny which separates us.

“I hope your lordship will not attempt to see me again: you must be sensible that your visits would be highly injurious to me, even the holy and solitary asylum which I have found would not protect me

from the malice which has already been so busy with my peace and fame. Alas! deprived as I am of those on whom I had a claim of protection, it behoves me to exert the utmost circumspection in my conduct; he in whom I expected to have found a guardian, Oscar, my dear unfortunate brother, is gone I know not whither, persecuted and afflicted by the monster who has been such a source of misery to me. Adieu, my lord; suffer no uneasiness on my account. If heaven prolongs my life, I have no doubt but I shall find a little comfortable shelter from the world, where conscious I have acted according to my principles of right, I shall enjoy the serenity which ever attends self-approbation; a serenity which no changes nor chances in this life will, I trust, ever wrest from
 Amanda Fitzalan."

St. Catherine's,
 May 12.

She dispatched this letter by an old man, who was employed in the garden at St. Catherine's, but her spirits were so much affected by writing it, that she was obliged to go up and lay on the bed. She considered herself as having taken a final adieu of Lord Mortimer, and the idea was too painful to be supported with fortitude.

She had lain about an hour on the bed, when sister Mary entered the room, and delivered her a letter, ere Amanda looked at the superscription, her agitated heart told her from whom it came. As she held it in her hand, she hesitated whether she should open it or not; yet, said she to herself, it can be no harm, he cannot, after what I have declared, suppose my resolution to be shaken. He writes to assure me of his perfect acquiescence in it. Sister Mary left her at the instant her deliberation ended by opening the letter.

To Miss Fitzalan.

"Inexorable Amanda! but I will spare both you

and myself the pain of further importunity; all I now request is, that for three months, at least, you will continue at St. Catherine's, or that, if you find a much longer residence there unpleasant, you will, on quitting it, leave directions where to be found: ere half the above-mentioned period be elapsed, I trust I shall be able satisfactorily to account for such a request. I am quitting Castle Carberry immediately: I shall leave it with a degree of tranquillity that would perhaps surprise you, after what has so lately passed, if in this one instance you will oblige your

Ever faithful
Mortimer."

This laconic letter surprised Amanda. By its style it was evident Lord Mortimer had recovered his cheerfulness; recovered it not from a determination of giving her up, but from a hope of their again meeting, as both of them could wish. A sudden transport rushed through her heart at such an idea, but quickly died away when she reflected it was almost beyond the possibility of things to bring about a pleasing interview between them. To refuse every request of Lord Mortimer's was painful, but propriety demanded she should not accede to the last; and with an unsteady hand, she returned the following answer.

To Lord Mortimer.

"My Lord,—I cannot comply with your request; you may, if you please, repeat inexorable Amanda: I had rather incur the imputation of obstinacy than imprudence, and think it much better to meet your accusation than deserve my own. How long I may reside at St. Catherine's, is to myself unknown; when I quit it, I certainly will not promise to leave my directions where you may find me.

"From your good sense I expected you would make exertions against useless regrets, and these exertions I knew would be attended with success, but,

as some return for the sincere pleasure I feel for your restoration to tranquillity, seek not to disturb again that of
Amanda Fitzalan."

St. Catherine's.

May 12th.

Scarcely had she sealed this letter, when she was called to dinner, but though she obeyed the summons, she could not eat. The nuns withdrew soon after dinner, and left her alone with the prioress. In a few minutes after their departure, the old gardener returned from Castle Carberry. After informing her he had put her letter safely into his lordship's hands, he added with a look which seemed to indicate a fear lest she should be distressed, "that he had received neither letter nor message from him, though he waited a long time; but he supposed," he said, "his lordship was then in too great a hurry to give any answer, as a chaise and four were waiting to convey him to Dublin."

Amanda burst into tears as the man retired from the room. She saw she had written to Lord Mortimer for the last time, and she could not suppress this tribute of regret. She was firmly convinced indeed she should behold him no more.

Two hours were elapsed since her messenger's return from the Castle, when sister Mary entered the room with a large packet, which she put into Amanda's hands, saying, it was given her by Lord Mortimer's servant, who rode off the moment he had delivered it.

Sister Mary made no scruple of saying, she should like to know what such a weighty packet contained. The prioress chid her in a laughing manner for her curiosity, and drew her into the garden, to give Amanda an opportunity of examining the contents.

She was surprised, on breaking the seal, to perceive a very handsome pocket-book in a black cover, and found, unsealed, a letter to this effect.

To Miss Fitzalan.

“I have put it out of your power to return this, by departing long ere you receive it. Surely, if you have the laudable pride you profess, you will not hesitate to use the contents of the pocket-book, as the only means of avoiding a weight of obligations from strangers; though discarded as a lover, surely I may be esteemed as a friend, and with such a title I will be contented till I can lay claim to a tenderer one.

“You start at this last expression, and I have no doubt, you will call me a romantic visionary, for entertaining hopes which you have so positively assured me can never be realized; but ere I resign them I must have something more powerful than this assurance, my sweet Amanda, to convince me of their fallacy. I was inexpressibly shocked this morning to learn by your letter, that your brother had met with misfortune. My blood boils with indignation against the monster who has, to use your emphatic expression, been such a source of misery to you both. I shall make it my particular care to try and discover the place to which Mr. Fitzalan is gone, and I need not add, that to the utmost of my power, I will serve him. My success in this affair, as well as that which concerns a much dearer being, you shall soon hear. I could wish you, except you find your present situation very unpleasant and inconvenient, not to change it for a short time. I think for a temporary abode, you could not find a more eligible one, and, as I shall be all impatience when I return to Ireland, to see you, a search after you would be truly insupportable. You have already refused to inform me of your determination in this matter: surely I may venture to request it may be as a wish, when I assure you, that, except I can see you in a manner pleasing to both, I never will force into your presence him, who, let things turn out as they may, must ever continue

Your faithful
Mortimer.”

“Gracious heaven!” said Amanda to herself, “what can he mean? he talks of returning to Ireland; of requiring something more powerful than my assurance to convince him of the fallacy of his hopes: surely Lord Mortimer would not be so cruel as to raise expectations in my bosom, without those in his own were well founded. No, dear Mortimer, I will not call you a romantic visionary, but the most amiable, the most generous of men, who for poor Amanda encounters difficulties, and sacrifices every splendid expectation.”

She now examined the contents of the pocket-book: it contained bills to the amount of two hundred pounds—a large present, but one so delicately presented, that even her ideas of propriety could hardly raise a scruple against her accepting it; it was indeed a most seasonable relief, and removed from her heart a load of anxiety which had weighed on it. After paying her father’s funeral expenses, the people with whom he lodged, and the apothecary who attended him, she found herself mistress of but twenty guineas in the whole world, and more than half of this she considered as already due to the benevolent sisters of St. Catherine’s, who were ill able to afford any additional expense.

She had resolved to force them to accept, what indeed she deemed a poor return for their kindness to her, and then she intended to retire to some obscure hovel in the neighbourhood, as better suited to the state of her finances, and continue theretill her health was sufficiently restored to enable her to make exertions for her livelihood; but she shuddered at the idea of residing among a set of boors. Lord Mortimer had prevented the necessity which had prompted her to think of a removal, and she now resolved to reside, at least for the time he had mentioned, in the convent, during which she supposed her uncertainties relative to him would be over, and that if it were not her fate to be his, she should, by the per-

fect re-establishment of her health, be able to use her abilities in the manner her situation required.

The next morning Amanda set about a temporary arrangement of her affairs. She presented thirty guineas to the sisterhood, which, with much difficulty, she forced them to accept, though in reality it was much required by them. She directly had all the things which belonged to her father and herself, brought to the convent; she had a variety of materials for painting and working, and proposed to herself to execute pieces in each way, not only as a means of amusing her time, but as a resource on an evil day. Thus wisely making use of the present sunshine, lest another storm should arise, which she should not be so well able to struggle against.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

In struggling with misfortune
Lies the proof of virtue.— *Shakespeare.*

THE turbulence of grief, and the agitation of suspense, gradually lessened in the mind of Amanda, and were succeeded by a soft and pleasing melancholy which sprang from the consciousness of having always, to the best of her abilities, performed the duties imposed upon her, and supported her misfortunes with placid resignation.

A fortnight had elapsed since Lord Mortimer's departure, when one morning a carriage was heard driving across the common, and stopped at the outer gate of St. Catherine's: Amanda, who was sitting at work in the parlour with the prioress, started in an universal trepidation at the sound: it may easily be imagined Lord Mortimer was uppermost in her thoughts: the door opened in a few minutes, and to her great astonishment, Mrs. Kilcorban and her two daughters appeared.

Agitation and surprise prevented Amanda from speaking. The young ladies saluted her with icy

civility, and the mother with rude familiarity, "Dear me," cried she, "you can't think how shocked we have all been to hear of your misfortunes. We returned to the country yesterday, for we have been in town the whole winter: so when I heard of your father's death, and your distress, I began to cast about in my brains some plan for helping you, and at last I hit upon one: you must know, my dear, the tutoress we brought to town would not come back with us—a dirty trollop by the by, and I think her place would be quite the thing for you. You will have the four young girls to learn French, and to work to, and I will expect you, as you have a good taste, to assist the eldest Miss Kilcorban in making up their things and dressing. I give twenty guineas a year. When we have no company the tutoress always sits at table, and gets, besides this, the best of treatment in every respect."

A blush of indignation had gradually conquered Amanda's paleness during Mrs. Kilcorban's eloquent speech.—"Your intentions may be friendly madam," cried she, "but I must decline your proposal." "Bless me, and why must you decline it? perhaps you think yourself not qualified to instruct: indeed this may be the case, for people often get credit for accomplishments they do not possess.—Well, if this is so, I am still content to take you, as you was always a decent behaved young body. Indeed you can't expect I should give you twenty guineas a year.—No, no I must make some abatement in the salary, if I am forced to get masters to help you in learning the girls."—"Miss Fitzalan, madam," exclaimed the prioress, who had hitherto continued silent, "never got credit for accomplishments she did not possess: her modesty has rather obscured than blazened forth her perfections: she does not, therefore, madam, decline your offer from a consciousness of inability to undertake the office of an instructor, but from a conviction she could never support impertinence and

folly." "Hoity-toity," cried Mrs. Kilcorban, "what assurance!" "Dear madam," said Miss Kilcorban, "perhaps the young lady has a better settlement in view.—We forget Lord Mortimer has lately been at Castle Carberry, and we all know his lordship is a friend to Captain Fitzalan's daughter." "Or, perhaps," cried Miss Alicia, in a giggling tone, "she means to be a nun." "Indeed, I suppose she means to be nothing good," rejoined Mrs. Kilcorban, "and I suppose it was by some impertinence or other she had a tiff with Lady Greystock. Well Miss (rising from her chair) you may be sorry yet your friend said so much about you, and I wish this pride of thine may not yet be humbled." So saying, she flounced out of the room, followed by her daughters, who, under an affectation of contempt, evidently shewed they were chagrined by the reception they had met.

In the evening a letter was delivered her by the servant, who said the messenger waited for an answer. Amanda broke the seal, but, instead of Lord Mortimer's, as she expected, a hand, to her entirely new, struck her view.

To Miss Fitzalan.

"My dear Creature—I think I was never so diverted in my life as at the description my mother and sisters gave of the reception they met with from you to-day at St. Catherine's. I vow to God it was excellent: nor can I help still wondering at their absurdity in thinking such a devilish fine girl as you are, would sacrifice your time in instructing a parcel of chits, when it can be devoted to a better purpose. To be brief, my dear girl, I will take you immediately under my protection, bring you to Dublin, settle you in elegant lodgings, with a handsome allowance, and not only make you, but declare you to be the grand Sultana of my affection; a situation which I can assure you, you will not be a little envied enjoying. In your answer to this, I shall expect to hear

when I may have the felicity of bringing you from obscurity, to the brilliant scene you were formed to ornament.

Believe me your devoted
B. Kilcorban."

The indignation which filled Amanda's breast at this scroll, cannot be expressed. Her blood seemed to boil in her veins : it was some time ere she could compose herself sufficiently to acquaint the prioress with the cause of her agitation : it was then agreed that the letter should be returned, with the following lines written on it.

"The author of this effusion of ignorance and impertinence has already inspired all the contempt he merits : should he repeat his insolence, something even more gratifying than contempt—chastisement, must ensue."

But the calm she had for some time experienced was destined to be interrupted. The next morning brought father O'Gallaghan, the little fat priest, (of whom we have made mention before in our pages) to the convent. Amanda was sitting alone in the parlour, drawing, when he entered. He seated himself by her, and the expression of his countenance seemed to declare his heart was brim full of something pleasant.

"Aye faith, my dear creature," said he, "I have an offer to make you, which, I believe, would make many girls almost jump out of their skins to hear. You remember the O'Flannaghans, I am sure, where you took tea last summer. Well, the eldest of the sons (as honest a lad as ever broke bread) cast a sheep's-eye on you then; but what with your going from the country, and some other matters, he thought there was no use then in revealing his flame; but now, when you are come plump in his way again, faith, he plucked up his courage, and told his father all about it. Old Flannaghan is a good natured soul

and is willing the match should take place. There is one little matter which to be sure, they are a little uneasy about, and that is your being of different persuasions ; but says I to them when this was stated, 'faith,' says I, 'you need not give yourselves any trouble about it, for I know the young woman to be a discreet soul, and I am sure she will make no hesitation about going to chapel instead of church, when she knows too, it is for her own interest ;' so, my dear sowl, I hope soon to give you the nuptial benediction and to be also your spiritual director."

Amanda had listened to this speech in silent amazement. She now rose, and would have quitted the room without speaking, to evince her contempt, had not an idea darted into her mind, that such conduct, perhaps might not be construed by the ignorant priest in the manner she wished ; she therefore stopped, and turning to him, said, "She must assure him that his embassy to her was equally fruitless and disagreeable ; and that if Mr O'Flannaghan consulted his own happiness, he would seek to unite himself with a woman brought up in his own sphere of life."—So saying, she quitted the room with a look of dignity which quite confounded the poor priest, who snatched up his hat in a great hurry, and waddled away to the farm, to communicate the ill success of his visit.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

Lo! I am here to answer to your vows,
And be the meeting fortunate! I come
With joyful tidings: we shall part no more.

Pleasure of Imagination

BUT a shock more severe than those she had lately experienced, was yet in store for our hapless heroine.—About a fortnight after the visit of the KilcORBANS and the priest, as she was rambling one evening, according to custom, among the solitary ruins of

St. Catherine's, indulging the pensive meditations of her soul, the figure of a man suddenly darted from under a broken arch, and discovered to her view the features of the hated Belgrave. Amanda gave a faint cry, and in unutterable dismay, tottered back a few paces against the wall. "Cruel Amanda," exclaimed Belgrave, while his look seemed to imply he would take advantage of her situation. His look, his voice operated like a charm to rouse her from the kind of stupefaction into which she had fallen at the first sight of him, and as he attempted to lay hold of her, she sprang past him, and, with a swiftness which mocked his speed, flew through the intricate windings of the place till she reached the convent.—Her pale and distracted look, as she rushed into the prioress' apartment, terrified the good old lady, who hastily interrogated her as to the cause of her disorder. Amanda had already confided to the prioress the events of her life, so that the good lady, on hearing Belgrave mentioned, no longer wondered at the agitation of Amanda, yet, as her fears, she saw, were too powerful for her reason, she endeavoured to convince her they were unnecessary. Amanda grew composed as she listened to the prioress; she was cheered by the voice of piety and friendship, and her heart again felt firm and elevated.

It was however agreed that Amanda should venture no more from the convent, but confine her rambles to the garden. Five weeks yet remained of the period Lord Mortimer had requested her to stay at St. Catherine's, before it was expired, she trusted and believed Belgrave would be weary of watching her, and would decamp; if then she neither saw nor heard from Lord Mortimer, she resolved to relinquish all hope concerning him, and immediately think on some plan, which should put her in a way of procuring subsistence.

Three weeks more elapsed without any event to discompose their tranquillity: but as the termina-

tion of the destined period approached, the agitation of Amanda increased: she deemed the awful crisis of her fate at hand, and trembled at the reflection.

She now for the first time avoided solitude; she wanted to fly from herself, and sat constantly with the prioress.

They were chatting together one evening after tea, when sister Mary entered the room, bearing a large packet, which she rather tossed than presented to Amanda, exclaiming, "From Lord Mortimer, I wish the troublesome fellow had not come back again: here we shall have him frisking or storming continually, and again plaguing us out of our lives." "From Lord Mortimer!" exclaimed Amanda, starting from her chair, and clasping the letter between her hands: "Oh! gracious heaven!" She said no more, but flew to her chamber, she tore open the seal: the envelope contained two letters, the first was directed in a hand unknown to her: her heart sickened as she dropped it on the ground: the other was the superscription of Lord Mortimer. She opened it with revived spirits, and read as follows—

"To Miss Fitzalan,

"I am returned, to tell my Amanda that nothing but the awful fiat of heaven shall part us more." Tears of joy gushed from Amanda as she exclaimed, "Can this, can this be true?" she wiped her eyes, and resumed the letter.

"Your solemn refusal to unite yourself to me threw me into agonies: but true love, like true courage, will never despair, will never yield to difficulties, without first trying every effort to conquer them. The difficulties I allude to were such as I expected to encounter in my attempt to unravel the whole of the deep and execrable plot which involved you in a situation so distressing to your feelings, and injurious to your character.

"I was happy, on my arrival in London, to find Lady Martha Dormer still at Lord Cherbury's house.

“The Marquis of Rosline and his family I learned continued at his villa: their absence from town rejoiced me, as it gave me an opportunity of interrogating their household, amongst whom I was convinced I should discover the trusty agents the amiable Marchioness had made use of in her scheme against you. The morning after my arrival, I accordingly set off for Portman-square. The man who opened the door knew me not, which I considered a lucky circumstance, for not being able to mention my name to the housekeeper, whom I desired him to send to me, she was not so much on her guard as she would otherwise have been.—She started as she entered the parlour, and lifted up her hands and eyes with unfeigned astonishment. She soon, however, recovered herself. I gave her to understand that my visit was not of the most amicable kind to her; I came, I said, to demand either the letter, or an account of the letter I had entrusted to her care for Miss Fitzalan, which contained a note of large value, and which I found had never been received by that young lady. Her countenance in a moment condemned her: her looks, I told her, confirmed the suspicions I was forced to entertain of her integrity, yet I was willing to come to an easy and private accommodation about it, provided she would truly and fully confess the part she had taken, or knew others to have taken in injuring Miss Fitzalan, while she resided in the Marquis’ house, by bringing Colonel Belgrave into it. I paused for her reply, I thought I saw something yielding in her face, and proceeded. If you confess all you know relative to the plot which was contrived and carried into execution in this house against Miss Fitzalan, I will settle every thing relative to the letter and its contents, in a manner pleasing to you.

“Upon this, she turned to me with a countenance of the utmost effrontery, and said she would not tell a lie to please any one. I will not shock you by repeating

all she said. She ended by saying, as to the letter she set me at defiance; true, I had given her one for Miss Fitzalan, but I might remember Miss Fitzalan was in a fit on the ground at the time, and she had called in other servants to her assistance, she said, and in the flurry and bustle which ensued, she knew not what became of it, others might as well be called upon as she. The note, which I had enclosed in the letter, and given her for you, I had received from my father's agent in the country; as a post-note I had endorsed it, and taken the number in my pocketbook: I therefore left Portman-square with a resolution of going to the bank, and if not already received, stopping payment. I had the satisfaction of finding it had not been offered at the bank. I suspected she would be glad to exchange it for cash as soon as possible, and therefore left my direction, as well as a request for the detention of any person who should present it.

“In consequence of this, a clerk came the following morning to inform me a woman had presented the note at the bank. I immediately returned with him, and had the satisfaction of seeing the housekeeper caught in the snare, she burst into tears at my appearance, and coming up to me, in a low voice, said, If I would have mercy on her, she would make a full confession of all she knew about the affair I had mentioned to her yesterday.

“I told her as I had promised on such condition to show her lenity, I would not violate my word. I received the note, sent for a coach, and handing the lady into it, soon conveyed her to Portman square. She then confessed, that both she and Mrs. Jane, the attendant who had been placed about your person, were acquainted and concerned in all the contrivances the Marchioness had laid against you, who scrupled not in acknowledging to them the inveterate hatred she bore you. She then laid open a scene of complicated iniquity, related the manner in which

Colonel Belgrave was brought into the house by her and Mrs. Jane, how they had stationed themselves in a place of concealment to listen, by which means they knew what passed between you, which she now in almost the very same words you made use of, repeated to me. As she spoke I wrote it, and made her sign a paragraph, purporting that it was a true confession of the part she had taken, and knew others to have taken, in attempting to injure Miss Fitzalan.

“ I now mentioned Mrs. Jane, whose evidence I wished for, to corroborate hers. This she assured me, I might procure by promising a reward, as Mrs. Jane was much dissatisfied with the Marchioness and Lady Euphrasia, neither of whom had recompensed her as she expected. She was now at the villa: but the housekeeper added, that she would strike out some expedient to bring her to town in the course of the week, I told her the affair of the note should be no more mentioned, and gave her a bill for fifty pounds as the reward I had promised, and she eagerly expected. I told her she might promise a similar one in my name to Mrs. Jane, provided she told the truth.

“ Mrs. Jane did not come to town as soon as I expected: but on receiving a summons to inform me of her arrival, I hastened to the house to take the confession of the fair culprit, which exactly corresponded with the housekeeper's, and I had the felicity of seeing her subscribe her name to it. Mrs. Jennings was the next and last person whose malice I wanted to refute. I went to her one morning in my carriage; she appeared lost in astonishment and confusion at my visit, and I saw, waited with trembling expectation to have the reason of it revealed. I kept her long in suspense: I was the friend, I told her, of a young lady, whose character she had vilely and falsely aspersed. The wretch seemed ready to sink into the earth, as I repeated to her all she had said concerning you to Lady Greystock. I told her of the consequences of defamation, and declared she

might expect the utmost rigour of the law, except she confessed her assertions were infamous falsehoods, and the motives which instigated her to them. She trembled with terror, and supplicated mercy. I desired her to deserve it by confession. She then acknowledged she was grossly and cruelly wronged you: but that she was provoked to speak maliciously against you from resentment at losing all the rich gifts Colonel Belgrave and promised her, if she brought you to comply with his wishes. She then related all the stratagems they had mutually concerted for your destruction, and brought me some letters, which I have kept, from him to you, and which she pretended you had received, lest she should lose the money he always gave her when she was successful in delivering them.

“The period for mentioning my project was now arrived; I desired, the morning after my visit to Mrs. Jennings, to be indulged in a tête-à-tête in Lady Martha’s dressing-room: I believed she half-guessed what the subject of it would be. I shall not recapitulate our conversation: suffice it to say, that her excellent feeling heart participated largely in my satisfaction: it did more than participate, it wished to increase it, and ere I could mention my project, she declared that henceforth my Amanda should be considered as her adopted daughter, and should from her receive such a fortune as such a title claimed.

“It was now agreed we should keep Lord Cherbury a little longer ignorant of our intentions: we proposed taking the Marchioness and Lady Euphrosia by surprise.

“He had hinted more than once his wishes for my paying my compliments at the Marquis’ villa. I now proposed going thither myself the ensuing day. At this proposal Lady Martha agreed to accompany me, and his lordship, you may be sure, determined to be one of the party.

“We had the happiness to find all the family at

home. The ladies all expressed themselves delighted at my unexpected appearance, and quiet charmed at my recovered looks. After passing half an hour in uninteresting chit-chat, I took the opportunity of a pause to commence my attack: it would be as painful to you as to me, to recapitulate all which ensued in consequence of it. Rage, guilt, and confusion, were conspicuous in the Marchioness and Lady Euphrasia: the Marquis and Lady Greystock looked astonished, and my father seemed overwhelmed with surprise, and consternation.

“ ‘She has infatuated him, (said Lord Cherbury,) she will be the bane of his life, and the destruction of my hopes.’ ‘Not Miss Fitzalan,’ cried I, ‘not Miss Fitzalan, but the enemies of Miss Fitzalan deceived me.’ ‘Unfortunate prepossession, (said Lord Cherbury, sternly,) but why, why, when you believed her guilty, were you so infatuated as to follow her to Ireland? why not calmly resign her to the infamy she merited?’ ‘I followed her, my lord, (replied I,) in hopes to withdraw her from her seducer’s arms. Alas: not in the arms of a gay and successful seducer, but apparently in the arms of Death did I find her, I saw her at the solemn hour which consigned her parent to his grave, and to have doubted her protestations of innocency then, would have been almost impious.’ Contrary to my first intention, my dear Amanda, I have given you a sketch of part of our conversation. For the remainder it shall suffice to say, that the Marchioness declared I had bribed her servants to blacken her character in order to clear Miss Fitzalan’s, an attempt she repeatedly assured me I should find unsuccessful. The Marquis talked in high terms of the dignity of his house, and how impossible it was the Marchioness should ever have disgraced it by such actions as I accused her of committing. I answered him in a manner equally warm, that my accusations were too well grounded and supported to dread refutation: that it was not

only due to injured innocence, but essential to my own honour, which would soon be materially concerned in whatever related to Miss Fitzalan, to have these accusations made public, if her ladyship refused to contradict the aspersions which might be thrown upon Miss Fitzalan, in consequence of the scene which passed at his lordship's house.

"This the Marchioness, with mingled rage and contempt, refused doing, and Lady Euphrasia, after the hint I gave of soon being united to you, left the room in convulsive agitation.

"I again repeated the evidence of her servants, and the refutation of Mrs. Jennings to her former story; I produced, to strengthen it, the unopened letters of Colonel Belgrave—thus continuing to put proof upon proof of your innocence (as Sancho Panza says) upon the shoulders of demonstration.

"The passions of the Marchioness rose at last to frantic violence. She persisted in alleging her integrity, and vilifying yours; but with a countenance so legibly impressed with guilt and confusion, that doubt of her falsehood could not be entertained even by those who wished to doubt it.

"The scene of violence we now became witness to, was painful to me, and shocking to Lady Martha: I therefore ordered the horses immediately to her ladyship's chariot, in which accompanied by me, she had preceded Lord Cherbury's coach, from the idea that our continuance at the villa might not be quite so long as his lordship's.

"As we expected, his lordship stayed behind, with the hope, I perceived, of being able to calm the perturbations of the Marchioness, and lessen the breach between us. He returned the next day to town. I have so long dwelt upon disagreeable scenes, that to go over any others would be dreadful; nor should I hint to you that I had such scenes to encounter, were it not to excuse and account for my absence from Castle Carberry. Our difficulties, (you see I

already unite your interest with mine,) began to decrease, and are at last happily overcome. Lady Martha made me write her intentions relative to you, and his lordship was quite satisfied with them. He authorizes me to assure you he longs to receive you into his family, as once a boast and acquisition to it, and he shall consider himself under obligations to you, if you hasten as much as possible the period of becoming one of its members, thus giving him an opportunity of making early amends, by attention to the daughter, for the injustice he did to the father.

“Lady Martha Dormer’s intentions I have only hinted at to you: in the letter, which I have the pleasure of enclosing, she is more explicit concerning you.

“Ere I close this letter, I must inform you that I made every possible enquiry relative to your brother, and was at length referred, by the agent of his late regiment, to an officer in it. I found he had quitted his quarters on leave of absence. I wrote immediately to his family residence, and after waiting long and impatiently for an answer to my letter, I despatched a special messenger to learn whether he were there or not. The courier returned with a polite note from the officer’s father, informing me that his son was gone on an excursion of pleasure with some friends, and that if he knew where to find him he would have transmitted my letters to him, which I might depend upon being answered the moment he returned.

“Keep up your spirits therefore about him, for by the time we arrive in England, I expect a letter from his friend, and let me not be any more pained by seeing your countenance clouded with care or anxiety.

“As a reward for curbing my impatience to see you this evening, be propitious to my request for early admission to-morrow; if charitable you will allow me to breakfast with you, for I shall take none

except with you, and without an express command to the contrary, shall take it for granted I am expected.

“But I forget that you have Lady Martha Dormer’s letter still to peruse, I acknowledge that, for old friendship’s sake, I supposed you would give mine the preference : but ere I bid you adieu, I must tell you that Araminta is a sincere participator in our happiness ; she arrived from Wales but a few minutes previous to my leaving London, and I would not allow her time, as she wished, to write to you. I almost forgot to tell you, that the Marquis’ family, amongst whom Lady Greystock is still numbered, instead of returning to town, set out for Brighthelmstone. I was disturbed within a few miles of Castle Carberry by a gentleman passing on horseback, who either strongly resembled, or was Colonel Belgrave. My blood boiled in my veins at this sight : I left the carriage, mounted one of my servant’s horses, and endeavoured to overtake him. He certainly avoided me by taking some cross-road. As to your personal security I had no apprehensions, having heard constantly from my good friend the doctor, about you ; but I dreaded the wretch, if it were really he, might disturb your tranquillity, either by forcing himself into your presence, or writing ; thank heaven, from all intrusions or dangers of this kind, my Amanda will now be guarded ; but again am I trespassing on the time you should devote to Lady Martha’s letter. Adieu, and do not disappoint my hopes of being allowed to visit you early.

Mortimer.”

Amanda perused this letter with emotions which can be better conceived than described. She could scarcely have parted with it without a second reading, had not Lady Martha’s demanded her attention : she snatched it hastily from the ground, where it had hitherto laid neglected, and read to the following purpose.

“That I warmly and sincerely congratulate my dear and amiable Miss Fitzalan, on the happy revolution of her affairs, she will readily believe, persuaded as she must be, of the deep interest I take in whatever concerns a person on whom the happiness of him, whom I have loved from childhood, so materially, so entirely, I may say, depends.

“Yet do not suppose me, my dear Miss Fitzalan, so selfish, as not to be able to rejoice at your happiness on your own account, exclusive of every consideration relative to Lord Mortimer: long since, I was taught by description to esteem and admire you, and even when the hope of being connected with you became extinct, I could not so entirely forego that admiration as to feel uninterested about you. Though I cannot give my adopted daughter a fortune by any means equal to that which Lady Euphrasia Sutherland will possess, Lord Cherbury is fully sensible that her perfections will abundantly make up for any deficiencies in this respect. Ten thousand pounds, and one thousand a year, is at present to be her portion, and the reversion of the remainder of my fortune is to be secured to her and Lord Mortimer: the final adjustment of all affairs is to take place at my house in the country, whither I propose going immediately, accompanied by Lady Araminta, where we shall both impatiently expect your arrival. Lord Cherbury has promised to follow us in a few days, so that I suppose he will also be at Thornbury to receive you. Farewell, my dear Miss Fitzalan; I have been brief in my letter, because I know I should not be pardoned by a certain person, if I engrossed too much of your time. I told him I would give you a hint of the impetuosity of his disposition; but he told me, perhaps to prevent this, that you were already acquainted with it. In one instance I shall commend him for displaying it, that is, in hastening you to Thornbury, to the arms of you sincere and affectionate friend,

Martha Dormer.”

To express what Amanda now felt for Lord Mortimer would be impossible; language could not do justice to her feelings: she felt love, gratitude, and admiration for him, all in their fullest extent, and all united, and she wept in the fulness of her heart over the joyful assurance of being his. With the two letters in her hand she repaired to the prioress' apartment, whom she found alone. She presented them to her; when she had finished the welcome packet, she turned to Amanda, and gave her a congratulatory embrace. "Lord Mortimer is worthy of you, my child," said the prioress, "and that is the highest eulogium I can pass on him." After commenting on different parts of the letter, she asked Amanda, a little archly, "whether she intended sending an express command to his lordship against coming early in the morning." Amanda honestly confessed she had no such intention, and expressed her wish to behold him.

CHAPTER XXXV.

Thus let me hold thee to my heart
 And every care resign:
 And shall we never—never part?
 Oh! thou my all that's mine. *Goldsmith.*

Joy is as great an enemy to repose as anxiety. Amanda passed an almost sleepless night, but early as she arose in the morning, she was but a short time in the parlour before Lord Mortimer arrived. He caught Amanda to his heart as a treasure restored to him by the immediate hand of heaven. Both for a few moments were unable to speak.

Amanda at length found utterance, and began to thank his lordship for all the difficulties he had gone through in vindicating her fame. He hastily stopped her effusions of gratitude, by bidding her ask her heart whether he had not been serving himself as well as her by what he had done.

From the soft confusion, into which his transports

threw her, Amanda endeavoured to recover herself by repairing to the breakfast-table, on which the good sisters had spread all the niceties, adapted for a morning repast, which the convent could produce: but breakfast was little attended to. Twelve o'clock struck and found them still loitering about the breakfast table. "The nuns will think we have made a tolerable breakfast," cried Lord Mortimer, smiling, while Amanda arose with precipitation, and they went together into the garden; here their converse became more connected than it had been hitherto; the generous intentions of Lady Martha Dormer, and the arrangements she had made for the nuptials of Amanda; were talked over, the marriage was to take place at Thornbury, Lady Martha's seat; they were to continue there a month, and from thence to go to an estate of Lord Cherbury's for the rest of the summer: a house in one of the squares was to be taken for their residence in the winter, and Lady Martha had promised, whenever she came to town, which was but seldom, she would make their house her home, provided they would promise to spend every Christmas, and three months at least in the summer, with her at Thornbury. Lord Mortimer said he had the choice of any of the earl's seats, but chose none, from the idea of the hall being more agreeable to Amanda. She assured him it was, and he proceeded to mention the presents Lady Martha had prepared for her, also the carriages and retinue he had provided, and expected to find at Thornbury against she reached it.

Lord Mortimer delicately considerate about all that concerned her, begged she would speak to the Prioress to procure a decent female, who should be a proper attendant for her in her journey; they should travel in one chaise, and he would follow in another.

Lord Mortimer presented her with a very beautiful purse, containing notes to the amount of five hundred pounds. Amanda blushed deeply, and felt

her feelings a little hurt at the idea of being obliged to Lord Mortimer for every thing. He pressed her hand, and in a voice of soothing tenderness, told her he should be offended if she did not from this moment consider her interest inseparable from his. The notes, he said, of right belonged to her, as they amounted to but the individual sum he had already devoted to her use. He requested she would not curb in the least her generous spirit; but fulfil all the claims that gratitude had on her. The benevolent sisters of St. Catherine's were the foremost in the list of those who had conferred obligations on her, and he desired she would not only reward them liberally at present, but promise them an annual stipend of fifty pounds.

Lord Mortimer presented her with his picture, which he had had drawn in London for that purpose: it was a striking likeness, and most elegantly set with brilliants. He also gave her a ring, with an emblematical device, adorned in the same manner as his picture, which Lady Martha had sent as a pledge of future friendship, and he now informed her that her ladyship, accompanied by Lady Araminta, intended to meet them at Holyhead, that all due honour and attention might be paid to her adopted daughter."

In the midst of their conversation the dinner bell rang from the convent. Amanda started, and telling him she could not stay another minute, was hurrying away. He hastily caught her, and declared she should not depart, neither would he to his solitary dinner, till she promised he might return early in the evening. To this she consented, provided he allowed her to have the Prioress and sister Mary, at least, to tea.

Lord Mortimer came even earlier than was expected. Amanda and he went into the garden: he said that he hoped, at the end of a week at farthest, she would be ready to begin her journey. Amanda readily promised to use all despatch.

Lord Mortimer's time was now passed almost continually at St. Catherine's, never leaving, except at dinner-time, when he went to Castle Carberry.

On coming to Amanda one evening as usual, Lord Mortimer appeared uncommonly discomposed. He scarcely noticed Amanda: but seating himself, placed his arm upon a table, and leaned his head upon it. Amanda was inexpressibly shocked, but felt too timid to make enquiries. He suddenly knit his brows, and muttered between his teeth, "Curse on the wretch."

Amanda could no longer keep silence: "What wretch?" she exclaimed. "First tell me, Amanda," said he, looking very steadfastly at her, "have you seen any stranger here lately?" "Good heaven!" replied she, "what can you mean by such a question? But I solemnly assure you I have not." "Enough," said he, "such an assurance restores me to quiet: but, my dear Amanda," coming over to her, and taking her hands in his, "since you have perceived my agitation, I must account to you for it. I have just seen Belgrave: he was but a few yards from me on the common when I saw him: but the mean despicable wretch durst not face me: he got out of my way by leaping over the hedge which divides the common from a lane with many intricate windings, I endeavoured, but without success, to discover the one he had retreated through."

The ensuing morning, instead of seeing his lordship at breakfast, a note was brought to Amanda, couched in these words.

"To Miss Fitzalan.

"I am unavoidably prevented from waiting on my dear Amanda this morning, but in the course of the day, she may depend upon either seeing or hearing from her faithful
Mortimer."

This note filled Amanda with the most alarming disquiet: it was evident to her that he was gone in

pursuit of Belgrave. She continued the whole morning the picture of anxiety, impatiently expecting the promised visit or letter; neither came, and she resolved to send, after dinner, the old gardener to Castle Carberry to enquire about Lord Mortimer. While she was speaking to him for that purpose, the maid followed her into the garden, and told her there was a messenger in the parlour from Lord Mortimer. She flew thither, but what words can express her surprise, when the supposed messenger, raising a large hat, which shadowed his face, and removing a handkerchief which he had hitherto held up to it, discovered to her the features of Lord Cherbury? She could only exclaim, "Gracious heaven! has anything happened to Lord Mortimer?" ere she sunk into a chair in breathless agitation.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

My heavy heart,
The prophetess of woe, fortells some ill
At hand.

LORD Cherbury hastened to support and calm her agitation, by assuring her Lord Mortimer was in perfect safety. Recovered by this assertion, she asked him, "how he was assured of this." He answered, "because he had seen him, though without being perceived by him, about an hour ago," and suddenly exclaimed, "Lord Mortimer does not, must not know of my being here." "Must not!" repeated Amanda, in inconceivable astonishment.

"Gracious heaven!" said Lord Cherbury, "how shall I begin, how shall I tell her? Oh! Miss Fitzalan," he continued, approaching her, "I have much to say, and you have much to hear, that will shock you. I believed I could better in an interview have informed you of particulars, but I find I was mistaken: I will write to you." "My Lord," cried Amanda, rising, all pale and trembling, "tell me now;

to leave me in suspense, after receiving such dreadful hints, would be cruelty." "Alas!" replied he, "I have said I will write to you: can you meet me this evening amongst the ruins?" Amanda gave an assenting bow. "I shall then," pursued he, "have a letter ready to deliver you. In the mean time I must inform you, no person in the world knows of my visit here but yourself, and of all beings, Lord Mortimer is the last I should wish to know it: and remember Miss Fitzalan, that on your secrecy everything most estimable in life, even life itself, perhaps, depends."

With these dreadful and mysterious words he departed, leaving Amanda a picture of horror and surprise: she retired to her chamber, and begged, if Lord Mortimer came in the evening, he might be told she was too ill to see him.

At the appointed hour she softly opened the chamber door, and every place being clear, stole softly from the convent.

She found Lord Cherbury waiting for her amidst the ruins. He had a letter in his hand, which he presented to her the moment she appeared.

"In this letter, Miss Fitzalan," said he, "I have opened to you my whole heart: it is a letter which will fix your destiny and mine: even should the request contained in it be refused, let me be the first acquainted with the refusal; then indeed I shall urge you no more to secrecy, for what will follow in consequence of such a refusal, must divulge all." "Oh! tell me, tell me," said Amanda, "tell me what is the request, and rid me of the torturing suspense I endure." "I cannot," he cried, "indeed I cannot. To-morrow night I shall expect your answer here at the same hour."

At this moment Lord Mortimer's voice calling upon Amanda was heard. Lord Cherbury instantly retired amongst the windings of the ruins, from whence Lord Mortimer soon appeared, giving Amanda only time to hide the fatal letter.

“Good heavens,” exclaimed he, “what could have brought you hither; and who was the person who just departed from you?” It was well for Amanda that the twilight gave but an imperfect view of her face: she leaned against a fragment of the building, and faintly exclaimed, “The person?” “Yes,” said Lord Mortimer, “I am sure I heard retreating footsteps.” “You are mistaken,” repeated Amanda, in the same faint accent. “Well,” said he, “though you may dispute the evidence of my ears, you cannot the evidence of my eyes: I see you here, and I am astonished at it: and why, if you have the fears you would persuade me you have, expose yourself to danger from the wretch who haunts this place, by coming here alone?” “Good heaven!” said Amanda, raising her hands and eyes, and bursting into tears, “how wretched am I!”

She was indeed at this moment superlatively wretched: her heart was oppressed by the dread of evil, and she perceived suspicions in Lord Mortimer which she could not attempt to remove, lest an intimation of the secret she was so awfully enjoined to keep, should escape her.

“Ah! Amanda!” said Lord Mortimer, losing in a moment the asperity with which he had addressed her, “ah! Amanda, forget, or at least forgive, all I have said.” She assured him with a faltering voice, he had not offended her. Her spirits were affected, she said, by all she had suffered during the day. Lord Mortimer placing, as she wished, these sufferings to his own account, declared her anxiety at once pleased and pained him, adding he would truly confess what detained him from her during the day, as soon as they returned to the convent.

Their return to it relieved the sisterhood, who had also been seeking Amanda, from many apprehensions.

He now acknowledged, “he had been in search of Belgrave. but the precautions he had taken to con-

deal himself, baffled all enquiries, which convinces me," continued Lord Mortimer, "if I wanted conviction about such a matter, that he has not yet dropped his villainous designs upon you: but the wretch cannot always escape the vengeance he merits." "Thank heaven!" said Amanda, "your enquiries proved fruitless. Oh! never, never repeat them: think no more about a wretch so despicable." "Well," cried Lord Mortimer, "why don't you hurry from the neighbourhood? fix the day, the moment for our departure: I have been here already five days. Lady Martha's patience is, I dare say, quite exhausted by this time, and what but want of inclination can longer detain you?" "Ah!" said Amanda, "you know too well that my departure cannot be retarded by want of inclination." "Then why not decide immediately upon the day?" Amanda was silent: her situation was agonizing, how could she fix upon a day, uncertain whether she did not possess a letter which would prevent her ever taking the projected journey?

"Well," said Lord Mortimer, after allowing her some time to speak, "I see I must fix the day myself: this is Tuesday—let it be Thursday." "Let us drop the subject this night, my Lord," said Amanda, "I am really ill, and only wait for your departure to retire to rest."

Lord Mortimer obeyed her, but with reluctance, and soon after retired.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

As one condemn'd to leap a precipice,
 Who sees before his eyes the depths below,
 Stops short, and looks about for some kind shrub
 To break his dreadful fall. *Dryden.*

AMANDA went to her chamber the moment Lord Mortimer departed: the nuns were already retired to rest, so that the stillness which reigned through the house added to the awfulness of her feelings, as she

sat down to peruse a letter which she had been previously informed would fix her fate.

“To Miss Fitzalan.

“To destroy a prospect of felicity, at the very moment its enveloping glooms are dispersed, is indeed the source of pangs most dreadful: yet such are the horrors of my destiny, that nothing but intervening between you, Mortimer and happiness, can save me from perdition. The preface I have already given is sufficient, and I will be explicit. Gambling, that bane of fame and fortune, has been my ruin: but whilst I indulged, so well did I conceal my propensity for it, that even those I called my friends were ignorant of it; my good and bad fortune were so equal, that my income suffered no considerable diminution. About five years ago a Mr. Freelove, a particular friend of mine, died, and left to my care his only son, whom I dare say you recollect having seen at my house last winter. This young man's property was left to my care: it consisted of a large estate, and fifty thousand pounds. At the period Freelove became my ward, I had had a constant run of ill luck for many months. Without being warned by ill success, I still went on, till all I could touch of my own property was gone. Did I then retire ashamed of my folly?—No—I could not bear to do so without another effort for recovering my losses, and in the effort risked my honour by using the money which lay in my hands belonging to Freelove: but when I found all was gone, oh, Miss Fitzalan! I still tremble at the distraction of that moment.

“All, I have before said, I could touch of my property was gone, the remainder was so settled, I had no power over it, except joined by my son. Great as was the injury he would sustain by mortgaging it, I was confident he would never hesitate doing so if acquainted with my distress; but to let him know it was worse than a torturing death could be to me, his early excellence, the nobleness of his principles,

mingled in the love I felt for him a degree of awe; to confess myself a villain to such a character: to see the blush of shame mantle his cheek for a father's crime,—oh horrible!—most horrible! I raved at the idea, and resolved, if driven by necessity to tell him of my baseness, not to survive the confession. Mortimer, I dare say, from motives of delicacy, has concealed from you the opposition I gave to his wishes after your innocence was declared, and the intentions of Lady Martha Dormer relative to you were made known to me: at last I found that I must either seem to acquiesce in these wishes and intentions, or else quarrel with my son and sister, and appear in their eyes the most selfish of beings: I therefore, to appearance, acquiesced, but resolved in reality to throw myself upon your mercy, believing that a character so tender, so perfect as yours, would have compassion on a fallen fellow-creature. Situated as I now am, the fortune Lady Martha Dormer proposes giving you can be of no consequence to me; the projected match between you and Mortimer is yet a secret from the public, of course it has not lessened his interest with the Rosline family. I have already been so lucky as to adjust the unlucky difference which took place between them, and I am confident the first overture he should make for an union with Lady Euphrasia, would be successful; the fortune which would immediately be received with her is sixty thousand pounds, and five thousand a year; the first would be given up to me in the place of a settlement I should make on Lord Mortimer: so that you see, my dear Miss Fitzalan, his marriage with Lady Euphrasia would at once extricate me from all my difficulties. Freelove in a few months will be of age, and the smallest delay in settling with him after he attains that period, must brand me with dishonour. I stand upon the verge of a dreadful abyss and it is in your power only to preserve me from plunging into it, and save me from destruction.

Mortimer, disappointed of the object of his affections, will, I have no doubt, without longer hesitation, accept the one I shall again propose to him. But should you determine on giving him up, you ask how, and by what means you can break with him after what has passed, without revealing your real motive for doing so to him? That is indeed a difficulty, but after going so far, I must not hesitate in telling you how it can be removed. You must retire secretly from his knowledge, and leave no clue behind by which you can be traced. If you comply with the first of my requests, but stop short here, you will defeat all your mercy, your pity, your compassion, would do to save me, since the consequence of any hesitation must be a full explanation, and I have already said it, and now repeat it in the most solemn manner, that I will not survive the divulgement of my secret, for never, no, never will I live humbled in the eyes of my son; if then you comply, comply not in part. I have now to you, as to a superior being, opened my whole heart it rests with you whether I shall live to atone for my follies, or by one desperate action terminate them. Should you show me mercy, unworthy as I am of it, should you in compassion to poor Mortimer, comply with a request, which can alone save him from the pangs he would feel on a father's quitting life unbidden, my gratitude, my admiration, my protection, whilst I live, shall be yours, and the first act of my restored life will be to secure you a competence. I shall wait with trembling anxiety for your appearance to-morrow night: till then believe me

Your sincere, though most unhappy friend,
Cherbury."

The fatal letter fell from Amanda, and she sank senseless on her chair: but the privation of her misery was of short duration and she recovered as if from a dreadful dream. "Was there no way," she asked her-

self, "by which the dreadful sacrifice it doomed her to, could be avoided? Lady Martha and Lord Mortimer would unite their efforts to save the honour of their wretched relative, they would sooth his feelings, they would --but she started in the midst of these ideas, started as if from ideas fraught with guilt and horror, as those fatal words rushed upon her mind—"I will not survive the divulgement of my secret," and she found to save the father she must sacrifice the son.

That Lord Mortimer would impute withdrawing herself from him to an attachment for Belgrave she felt convinced, and that her fame as well as peace should be sacrificed to Lord Cherbury, caused such a whirl of contending passions in her mind, that reason and reflection for a few minutes yielded to their violence, and she resolved to vindicate herself to Lord Mortimer. This resolution, however, was of short duration; as her subsiding passions again gave her power to reflect, she was convinced that by trying to clear herself of an imaginary crime she should commit a real one, since to save her own character, Lord Cherbury's must be stigmatized, and the consequence of such an act he had already declared, so that not only by the world, but by her own conscience she should for ever be accused of accelerating his death.

"It must, it must be made," she wildly cried, "the sacrifice must be made, and Mortimer is lost to me for ever." She flung herself on the bed, and passed the hours till morning, in agonies too great for description. From a kind of stupefaction rather than sleep, into which she had gradually sunk towards morning, she was roused by a gentle tap at her door, and the voice of sister Mary informing her that Lord Mortimer was below and impatient for his breakfast.

Weak and trembling, Amanda descended to the parlour. The moment she entered it, Lord Mortimer exclaimed, "Gracious heaven! what is the matter?" Then with unutterable tenderness he folded his arms about her, and while her drooping head sunk on his

bosom, declared he would immediately send for the physician who had before attended her.

He was with difficulty persuaded to give up his intention: nor would he relinquish it till Amanda promised, if not better before the evening, to inform him, and let the physician be sent for.

They now sat down to breakfast, at which Amanda was unable either to preside or eat. When over, she told Lord Mortimer she must retire to her chamber, as rest was essential for her: but between nine and ten in the evening she would be happy to see him. He tried to persuade her that she might rest as well upon the sofa in the parlour as in her chamber, and that he might then be allowed to sit with her; but she could not be persuaded to this,

He at last retired with great reluctance, but not till she had several times desired him to do so.

Amanda now repaired to her chamber, but not to indulge in the supineness of grief, though her heart felt bursting, but to settle upon some plan for her future conduct. In the first place she immediately meant to write to Lord Cherbury, to acquaint him with her compliance.

In the next place she designed acquainting the prioress with the sudden alteration in her affairs, only concealing from her the occasion of that alteration, and as but one day intervened between the present and the one fixed for her journey, she meant to beseech her to think of some place to which she might retire from Lord Mortimer.

As soon as she had settled the line of conduct she should pursue, she sat down to pen her renunciation of Lord Mortimer, which she did in the following words

“To the Earl of Cherbury.

“My Lord,—To your wishes I resign my happiness; my happiness I repeat, for it is due to Lord Mortimer to declare, that an union with such a cha-

acter as his, must have produced the highest felicity. It is also due to my own to declare that it was neither his rank nor his fortune, but his virtues which influenced my inclinations in his favour.

“Happy had it been for us all, my Lord, but particularly for me, had you continued steady in opposing the wishes of your son.

“I thank your lordship for your intentions relative to me: but must assure you, both now and for ever, I shall decline having them executed for me.

“I shall not disguise the truth, it would not be in your lordship’s power to recompense the sacrifice I have made you: and, besides, pecuniary obligations can never sit easy upon a feeling mind, except they are conferred by those we know value us, and whom we value ourselves,

I have the honour to be,
Your lordship’s obedient servant,
Amanda Fitzalan.”

The tears she had with difficulty restrained while writing, now burst forth. She rose and walked to the window, to try if the air would remove the faintness which oppressed her: from it she perceived Lord Mortimer and the prioress in deep conversation at a little distance from the convent. She conjectured that she was their subject; for as Lord Mortimer retired, the prioress, whom she had not seen that day before, came into the chamber. After the usual salutations—“Lord Mortimer has been telling me you were ill,” said she, “tell me, my dear, what is the matter?”

Amanda knelt before her, she took her hands, pressed them to her burning forehead and lips, and bedewed them with tears, while she exclaimed, “she was wretched.” “Wretched!” repeated the prioress, “for heaven’s sake be explicit: you sicken my heart by your agitation: it foretells something dreadful!”

“It does, indeed,” said Amanda, “it foretells that Lord Mortimer and I shall never be united.”

The prioress started, and surveyed Amanda with a look which seemed to say, she believed she had lost her senses: then with assumed composure, begged she would defer any farther explanation of her distress till her spirits were in a calmer state. "I will not rise," cried Amanda, "till you say, that, notwithstanding the mysterious situation in which I am involved, you will continue to be my friend. Oh! such an assurance would assuage the sorrows of my heart."

"Surely, my dear child," cried the prioress, "should know me too well to desire such an assurance."

She now insisted on Amanda's taking a chair, and then begged, as far as she could, without farther delay, she would let her into her situation.

Amanda immediately complied,—“An unexpected obstacle to her union with Lord Mortimer,” said she, “had arisen, an obstacle which, while compelled to submit to, she was bound most solemnly to conceal; it was expedient therefore she should retire from Lord Mortimer, without giving him the smallest intimation of such an intention, lest, if he suspected it, he should enquire too minutely, and by so doing plunge not only her, but himself, into irremediable distress: to avoid this, it was necessary all but the prioress should be ignorant of her scheme, and by her means she hoped she should be put in a way of finding such a place of secrecy and security as she required.”

The prioress remained silent for a few minutes, and then addressed her in a solemn voice.

“I own Miss Fitzalan, your conduct appears so inexplicable, so astonishing, that nothing but the opinion I have formed of your character, from seeing the manner you have acted since left to yourself, could prevent my esteem from being diminished; but weigh well what you are about, consider in the eyes of the world you are acting a dishonourable part, in breaking your engagement with Lord Mortimer without assigning some reason for doing so.

Nothing short of a point of conscience should influence you to this." "Nothing short of it has," replied Amanda, "therefore pity, and do not aggravate my feelings by pointing out the consequences which will attend the sacrifice I am compelled to make: only promise," taking the prioress' hand, "only promise, in this great and sad emergency, to be my friend."

Her looks, her words, her agonies, stopped short all the prioress was going to say: and she gave her all the consolation now in her power, by assuring her that she would immediately think about some place for her to retire to. She then insisted on Amanda's lying down to compose herself, and retired from the room. In two hours she returned: "she had a relation in Scotland," she told Amanda, "who from reduced circumstances, had kept a school for many years: but as the infirmities of age came on, she was not able to pay so much attention to her pupils as their friends thought requisite, and she had only been able to retain them by promising to get a person to assist her. "I should not mention such a place to you," said the prioress, "but that the necessity there is of your immediately retiring from Lord Mortimer, leaves me no time to look out for another. But do not imagine I wish you to continue there." "My mind is so enervated by grief," said Amanda, "that it will be long ere I can make any great exertion, and the place you have mentioned is, from its obscurity, just such a one as I desire to go to." "There is besides another inducement," said the prioress, "namely its being but a few miles from Port-Patrick, to which a fair wind will bring you in a few hours; I know the master of a little wherry, which is perpetually going backwards and forwards; he lives in this neighbourhood, and I shall send for him this evening, informing him of the time you wish to go, and desire his care till he leaves you himself at Mrs. Macpherson's.

Amanda thanked the prioress, who proceeded to say "that on the presumption of her going to her cousin's she had already written a letter for her to take: but, wished to know whether she would be mentioned by her own or a fictitious name."

Amanda replied, "By a fictitious one," and fixed on that of Frances Donald, which the prioress inserted and then read the letter.

To Mrs Macpherson.

"Dear Cousin,—The bearer of this letter, Frances Donald, is the young person I have procured you for an assistant in your school. I have known her for some time, and can vouch for her cleverness and discretion. She is well born, well educated, and has seen better days, I have told her you give but ten pounds a year: her going proves she is not dissatisfied with the salary. We do tolerably well in the little school we keep, and trust our gratitude to heaven for its present goodness will obtain a continuance of it. I beg to hear from you soon,

And am, my dear cousin,

Your sincere friend and affectionate kinswoman,
St. Catherine's. Elizabeth Dermot."

The distraction of Amanda's thoughts were now abated, from having everything adjusted relative to her future conduct. She besought the prioress not to delay writing after her departure, and to relate faithfully everything which happened in consequence of her flight. The prioress solemnly promised to obey her request.

Amanda said, "she meant to leave a letter on the dressing-table for Lord Mortimer, with the notes he had given her, inclosed in it. The picture and the ring," said she, with a falling tear, "I cannot part with:" she told the prioress she would leave a present for the woman who had been engaged to attend her to England, as some small recompense for her disappointment: she meant only to bring some linen

and her mourning to Scotland, the rest of her things, including her music and books, at some future and better period, might be sent after her.

Amanda was in debt to the sisterhood for three months board and lodging, which was ten guineas. Of the two hundred pounds which Lord Mortimer had given her on leaving Castle Carberry, one hundred and twenty remained. So that though unable to answer the claims of gratitude, she thanked heaven she was able to fulfil those of justice. The prioress drank tea with her in her own room. When over, Amanda said she would lie down, in order to try and compose herself against Lord Mortimer came. The prioress accordingly withdrew, saying, "she should not be disturbed till then."

By this means Amanda was enabled to hasten to the ruins at the appointed hour: she found Lord Cherbury already waiting there. She presented him the letter in silence. He received it in the same manner; but when he saw her turning away to depart, he snatched her hand, and exclaimed, "Tell me, tell me, Miss Fitzalan, is this letter propitious?" "It is," replied she, in a faltering voice. "Then may heaven eternally bless you," cried he, falling at her feet, and wrapping his arms about her.

"Let me go, my Lord," said Amanda. "In pity to me, in mercy to yourself, let me go, for one moment longer we may be discovered."

Lord Cherbury started up.—"From whom,"—cried he, "can I hear about you?" "From the prioress of St. Catherine's," replied Amanda, in a trembling voice, "she only knows the secret of my retreat."

Scarcely had Amanda returned to her chamber ere the prioress came to inform her that Lord Mortimer was in the parlour. She instantly repaired to it. The air had a little changed the deadly hue of her complexion, so that from her looks he supposed her better, and her words strengthened this supposition.

Amanda desired him not to come to breakfast the next morning, nor to the convent till after dinner, as she would be so busy preparing for her journey, she would have no time to devote to him. He wanted to convince her he could not retard her preparation by coming, but she would not allow this.

Amanda passed another wretched night. She breakfasted in the morning with the nuns, she swallowed it in haste, and withdrew to her chamber. Here she instantly sat down to write a farewell letter to Lord Mortimer.

“To Lord Mortimer.

“My Lord,—A destiny, which neither of us can control, forbids our union. In vain were obstacles encountered and apparently overcome; one has arisen to oppose it, which we never could have thought of, and in yielding to it, as I am compelled to do, I find myself separated from you, without the remotest hope of our ever meeting again, without being allowed to justify my conduct, or offer one excuse which might in some degree palliate the abominable ingratitude and deceit I may appear guilty of; appear I say, for in reality, my heart is a stranger to either, as it is now agonized at the sacrifice it is compelled to make: but I will not hurt your lordship’s feelings by dwelling upon my own sufferings.

“I cannot bid you pity me, though I know myself deserving of compassion: I cannot bid you forbear condemning me, though I know myself undeserving of censure. In this letter I enclose the notes I received from your lordship: the picture and ring I have detained; they will soon be my only vestiges of former happiness. Farewell, Lord Mortimer, dear and invaluable friend, farewell for ever. May that peace, that happiness you so truly deserve, be yours, and may they never again meet with such interruptions as they have received from the unfortunate

Amanda M. Fitzalan.”

This letter was blistered with her tears: she laid it in a drawer till evening, and then proceeded to pack whatever she meant to take with her in a little trunk. In the midst of this business the prioress came in to inform her she had seen the master of the wherry, and settled everything with him. About three o'clock the following morning he was to come to the convent for her: he had also promised to provide everything necessary on board for her.

Matters being thus arranged, Amanda told the prioress, to avoid suspicion, she would leave the money she intended for the woman, who had been engaged to accompany her to England, on her dressing-table, with a few lines purporting who it was for. The prioress approved of her doing so: and immediately left her. Amanda took the opportunity of putting up fifteen guineas in paper, five for the woman, and ten for the nuns. She wrote as follows to the prioress:—

“To Mrs. Dermot.

“Dear Madam,—Was my situation otherwise than it now is, be assured I never should have offered the trifle you will find in this paper as any way adequate to the discharge of my debt to you, and your amiable companions. I have also left five guineas for the woman you were so good as to engage to attend me to England. I trust she will think them a sufficient recompense for any trouble or disappointment I may have occasioned her.

“Farewell, dear Mrs. Dermot, dear and amiable inhabitants of St. Catherine’s farewell. As Amanda will never forget you in hers, so never let her be forgotten in your orisons, and never cease to believe her
Grateful, sincere, and affectionate,
Amanda M. Fitzalan.”

Lord Mortimer came early to the convent.—The dejected looks of Amanda immediately struck him.

“Perhaps,” said he, “you would like to rest one day, and not commence your journey to-morrow?”

“No, no,” cried Amanda, “it shall not be deferred. To-morrow,” continued she, with a smile of anguish, “I will commence it.”

Amanda perceived that if she did not exert herself, her dejection would lead to enquiries she would find it difficult to evade; but as to exert herself was impossible, in order to withdraw his attention, in some degree, from herself, she proposed, as this was the last evening they should be at the convent, they should invite the nuns to tea with them. Lord Mortimer immediately acquiesced in the proposal, and the invitation being sent, was accepted. But the conversation of the whole party was of a melancholy kind, and about nine, which was their hour for prayers, they retired.

When they withdrew, Lord Mortimer endeavoured to cheer Amanda, and besought her to exert her spirits.—Of his own accord, he said he would leave her early, that she might get as much rest as possible against the ensuing day. He accordingly rose to depart. What an agonizing moment for Amanda, to hear, to behold the man so tenderly beloved, for the last time: to think that ere that hour the next night she should be far, far away from him, considered as a treacherous and ungrateful creature, despised, perhaps execrated, as a source of perpetual disquiet and sorrow to him! Her heart swelled at those ideas with feelings she thought would burst it, and when he folded her to his bosom, and bid her be cheerful against the next morning, she involuntarily returned the pressure, whilst a shower of tears burst from her. Lord Mortimer, surprised and shocked at these tears and emotions, re-seated her, for her agitation was contagious, and he trembled so much that he could not support her; then throwing himself at her feet, “My Amanda, my beloved girl!” cried he, “what is the matter? Is any wish of your heart yet unfulfilled? If so, let no mistaken notion of delicacy influence

you to conceal it, on your happiness you know mine depends: tell me, therefore, I entreat you, I conjure you, tell me, is there anything I can do to restore you to cheerfulness?" "Oh! no," said Amanda, "all that a mortal could do to serve me, you have already done, and my gratitude, the fervent sense I have of the obligations I lie under to you, I cannot fully express. May heaven," raising her streaming eyes, "may heaven recompense your goodness, by bestowing the choicest of its blessings on you!" "That," said Lord Mortimer, half smiling, "it has already done in giving you to me! but tell me, what has dejected you in this manner? something more than fatigue I am sure."

Amanda assured him he was mistaken, and fearful of his other enquiries, told him, "she only waited for his departure to retire to rest."

Lord Mortimer instantly rose from his kneeling posture, "Farewell, then, my dear Amanda," cried he, "farewell, and be well and cheerful against the morning."

She pressed his hand between hers and laying her cold wet cheek upon it. "Farewell," said she, "when next we meet I shall, I trust, be well and cheerful!" for in heaven alone (thought she at that moment) we shall ever meet again.

On the spot on which Lord Mortimer left her, Amanda stood motionless, till she heard the hall door close after him: all composure then forsook her, and in an agony of tears and sobs, she threw herself upon the seat he had occupied. The good prioress, guessing what her feelings at this minute must be, was at hand, and came in with drops and water, which she forced her to take, and mingled the tears of sympathy with hers.

Her soothing attentions in a little time had the effect she desired. They revived in some degree, her unhappy young friend, who exclaimed, that the severest trial she could ever possibly experience was now over. "And will, I trust and believe," replied the prioress, "even in this life yet be rewarded."

It was agreed that Amanda should put on her habit and be prepared against the man came for her. The prioress promised as soon as the house was at rest, to follow her to her chamber. Amanda accordingly went to her chamber, put on her travelling dress, and was soon followed by the prioress,

She left the letters, one for Lord Mortimer, and the other for the prioress, on the table, and then, with a melancholy impatience, waited for the man, who was punctual to the appointed hour of three, and announced his arrival by a tap at the window. She instantly arose, and embraced the prioress in silence, who had only power to say, "God bless you my dear child, and make you as happy as you deserve to be."

Amanda then softly stepping along the gallery, opened the hall-door, where she found the man waiting. Her little trunk was already lying in the hall; she pointed it out to him, and as soon as he had taken it, they departed. The man seeing her pale and trembling, told her he had an arm at her service, which she gladly accepted, being scarcely able to support herself: a small boat was waiting for them about half a mile from Castle Berry; it conveyed them in a few moments to the vessel; which the master previously informed her would be under-weight directly: she was pleased to find his wife on board, who conducted Amanda to the cabin, where she found breakfast laid out for her. She took some tea and a little bread, being almost exhausted with fatigue.

The woman attended Amanda with the most assiduous care, and about four o'clock in the afternoon informed her they had reached Port Patrick. Amanda arose, and sending for the master, told him, "as she did not wish to go to an inn, she would thank him to hire a chaise to carry her directly to Mrs. Macpherson's." He said she should be obeyed, and soon returned to inform her a carriage was ready.—Amanda entered the chaise the moment she landed.

Mrs. Macpherson lived about five miles from Port Patrick, and they accordingly soon reached her habitation.

Amanda's companion, by her desire, went first into the house to prepare Mrs. Macpherson for her reception. He returned in a few minutes, and telling her she was happy at her arrival, conducted her into the house. From a narrow passage they turned into a small gloomy parlour, with a clay floor. Mrs. Macpherson was sitting in an old arm-chair; her face was sharp and meagre, her stature low, and doubled with age. She just nodded to Amanda on her entrance, and putting on a pair of large spectacles surveyed her without speaking. Amanda presented Mrs. Dermot's letter, and then, though unbidden, seated herself on the window-seat till she had perused it. At length the old lady broke silence, and her voice was as sharp as her face. "So child," said she, "to be sure I did desire my cousin to get me a young person, but not one so very young, as you appear to be." "Lord bless you," said the man, "if that is a fault, why it is one will mend every day." "Aye, aye," cried the old dame, "but it will mend a little too slow for me. However, child, as you are well recommended, I will try you. My cousin says something of your being well born, and having seen better days: however, child, I tell you beforehand, I shall not consider what you have been but what you are now; so pray, young woman, tell me, whether you will be able to do as I wish." "Yes, madam," replied Amanda, in a voice almost choaked by the variety of painful emotions she experienced.

"Well then, we are agreed, as you know the salary I give." The master of the vessel now took his leave, never having been asked by Mrs. Macpherson to take any refreshment.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

Of joys departed—never to return,
How bitter the remembrance.

Blair.

“WELL, child,” said Mrs. Macpherson, “do you choose to take anything?” “I thank you, madam,” replied Amanda, “I should like a little tea.” “Oh, as to tea, I have just taken my own, and the things are all washed and put by; but if you like a glass of spirits and water, and a crust of bread, you may have it.” Amanda said she did not. “Oh! very well,” cried Mrs. Macpherson, “I shall not press you, for supper will soon be ready.” She then desired Amanda to draw a chair near hers, and began torturing her with a variety of minute and trifling questions.

Amanda briefly said, “her father had been in the army, that many disappointments and losses had prevented him making any provisions for her, and that on his death, which happened in the neighbourhood of St. Catherine’s, the nuns had taken her, out of compassion, till she procured an establishment for herself.” “Aye! and a comfortable one you have procured yourself, I promise you,” said Mrs. Macpherson, “if it is not your own fault.” She then told Amanda, “she would amuse her by showing her her house and other concerns.” This was easily done, as it consisted but of the parlour, two closets adjoining it, and the kitchen: the other concerns were a small garden, planted with kale, and a field covered with thistles. “A good comfortable tenement this,” cried Mrs. Macpherson, shaking her head with much satisfaction. On returning to the parlour she unlocked a press, and took out a pair of coarse brown sheets to air for Amanda. She herself slept in one closet, and in the other was a bed for Amanda.

The promised supper was at length served: it con-

sisted of a few heads of kale, some oaten bread, a jug of water, and a phial half full of spirits, which Amanda would not taste, and the old lady herself took but sparingly: they were lighted by a small candle, which, on their retiring to their closets, Mrs. Macpherson cut between them.

Fatigued by the contending emotions she experienced, as well as the sickness she went through at sea, Amanda soon retired to her bed, and fell into a profound slumber, in which she continued till roused in the morning by the shrill voice of Mrs. Macpherson, exclaiming, as she rapped at the door, "Come, come, Frances, it is time to rise."

Amanda started from her sleep, and hurrying on her clothes, was with her in a few minutes. She found the old lady seated at the breakfast-table, who said, "that on account of her fatigue she excused her lying in bed so late this morning, for it was now eight o'clock: but that in future she would expect her to rise at six in summer, and seven in winter; adding as there was no clock, she would rap at her door for that purpose every morning."

The tea was now poured out, it was of the worst kind, and sweetened with coarse brown sugar, the bread was oaten, and there was no butter. Amanda swallowed a little of it with difficulty, and then with some hesitation, said, "she would prefer milk to tea." Mrs. Macpherson frowned exceedingly at this, and said, "she kept no cow herself, and only took as much milk as served her tea, and an old tabby cat."

Amanda replied, "it was of no consequence," and Mrs. Macpherson said, "indeed she supposed so," and muttered something of people giving themselves airs they had no pretensions to. The tea-table was removed by nine, when the school began: it consisted of about thirty girls, most of them daughters of farmers in the neighbourhood. At two the school broke up, and Amanda, almost as delighted as the

children to be at liberty, was running into the garden to try if the air would be of use to a very violent headache, when she was called back, to put the forms and other things in order; she coloured, and stood motionless, till recollecting that if she refused to obey Mrs. Macpherson, a quarrel would probably ensue, which, circumstanced as she was, without knowing where to go to, would be dreadful; she silently performed what she had been desired to do. Dinner was then brought in: it was simple and sparing as a Bramin could desire it to be. When over, Mrs. Macpherson composed herself to take a nap in her large chair without making any apology to Amanda.

The evening passed most disagreeably. Mrs. Macpherson was tedious and inquisitive in her discourse, and it was almost as painful to listen as to answer her. Amanda was happy when the hour for retiring to bed arrived, and relieved her from what might be called a kind of mental bondage.

Such was the first day Amanda passed in her new habitation, and a week elapsed in the same manner, except that on Sunday she went to the kirk with Mrs. Macpherson. At the end of the week she felt herself so exceedingly ill from the fatigue and confinement she endured, as Mrs. Macpherson would not let her walk out, that she told her, "except allowed to go out every evening, she must leave her, as she could not bear so sedentary a life. Mrs. Macpherson looked disconcerted, and grumbled a good deal: but as Amanda spoke in a resolute manner, she was frightened, lest she should put her threat into execution, she was so extremely useful in the school, and at last told her, "she might take as much exercise as she pleased every day after dinner."

Amanda gladly availed herself of this permission, she explored all the romantic paths about the house, but the one she chiefly delighted to take was that which led to the sea: here she could freely indulge

her tears, and gaze on the picture of Lord Mortimer. She feared no observation, the rocks formed a kind of recess about her, and in going to them she seldom met a creature.

A fortnight passed in this way, and she began to feel surprise and uneasiness at not hearing from Mrs. Dermont: if much longer silent she resolved on writing, feeling it impossible to endure much longer the agony her ignorance of Lord Mortimer's proceedings gave her, when the very morning previous to the one she had fixed for writing, she received a letter; the envelope contained two letters; the first she cast her eyes on was in Lord Cherbury's hand, she trembled, tore it open, and read:—

“To Miss Fitzalan.

“In vain, my dear madam, do you say you never will receive pecuniary favours from me. I am but just returned to London, and shall immediately order my lawyer to draw up a deed, entitling you to three hundred pounds a year, which I shall transmit to the prioress (as I have this letter) to send to you. I am informed that Lord Mortimer has left Ireland, and daily expect him in town. I have not only every hope, but every prospect of his complying with my wishes; this, I imagine, will be rather pleasing to you to hear, that you may know the sacrifice you made, is not made in vain, but will be attended with all the good consequences I expected to derive from it.

“That in this world as well as the next, you may be rewarded for it, is, dear madam, the sincere wish of him, who has the honour to subscribe himself,

Your most grateful, most obliged,
And most obedient humble servant,
Cherbury.”

“Unfeeling man!” exclaimed Amanda, “how little is your heart interested in what you write, and how slight do you make of the sacrifice I have made

you, how cruelly mention your hopes which are derived from the destruction of mine : no, sooner would I wander from door to door for charity, than be indebted to your ostentatious gratitude for support you, whose treachery and deceit have ruined my happiness." She closed the letter, and took the other which she saw was from her dear Mrs. Dermot.

"To Miss Donald.

"Ah! my dear child, why extort a promise from me of being minute in relating every thing which happened in consequence of your departure, a promise so solemnly given that I dare not recede from it? yet most unwillingly do I keep it, sensible as I am that the intelligence I have to communicate will but aggravate your sorrows. You left me, you may remember, about three o'clock; I then went to bed, but so fatigued and oppressed I could scarcely sleep. After prayers I repaired to the parlour, where sister Mary had already prepared every thing for your and Lord Mortimer's breakfast. I had not been long alone when Lord Mortimer came in, cheerful, blooming, and animated. He asked me had I seen you. I answered, 'No.' He soon grew impatient, said you were a lazy girl, and he feared you would make a bad traveller. He then rang the bell and desired the maid to go and call you. The maid returned in a few minutes and said you were not above. 'Well,' said Lord Mortimer, 'she is in some other apartment, pray hasten her hither.' In a few minutes after she departed, sister Mary, all pale and breathless, rushed into the room:—'Oh, heavens!' cried she, 'Miss Fitzalan cannot be found: but here are two letters I found on her dressing-table, one for you, madam, and one for Lord Mortimer.' I know not how he looked at this instant, for a guilty conscience came over my mind, which prevented me raising my eyes to his. I took the letter in silence, opened, but had no power to read it. I could not move till a

deep sigh, or rather groan, from Lord Mortimer roused me. I started from my seat, and perceived him pale and motionless. I threw open the garden door to give him air, this a little revived him. 'Be comforted, my lord,' said I, he shook his head mournfully, and waving his hand for me neither to speak nor follow him, passed into the garden. I must here declare, my dear child, that you have been too generous, and also that the sum you betrayed us into taking, is but considered as a loan by us: but to return to my first subject: the alarm now became general concerning you, and the nuns crowded into the room, grief and consternation in every countenance. In about half an hour I saw Lord Mortimer returning to the parlour, and I then dismissed them. He trembled, was pale as death, and spoke with a faltering voice. He gave me your letter to read, and I put mine into his hands. 'Well, my Lord,' said I, on perusing it, 'we must rather pity than condemn her.' 'From my soul,' cried he, 'I pity her, I pity such a being as Amanda Fitzalan, for being the slave, the prey of vice: but she has been cruel to me, she has deceived, inhumanly deceived me, and blasted my peace for ever. The suspicions, which but a few nights ago, I could have killed myself for entertaining, are now fully confirmed: they intruded on my mind from seeing Belgrave haunting this place, and finding her secreted amidst the ruins at a late hour. But may an early repentance snatch thee from the villain who now triumphs over thee, and may we, since thus separated, never meet again. So well,' continued he, 'am I convinced of the cause of her flight, that I shall not make one enquiry after her.' I attempted to speak to your justification, but he silenced me. I begged he would allow me to get him breakfast. He could touch nothing, and said he must return directly to Castle Carberry, but promised, in the course of the day, to see me again. I followed him into the hall; I saw his emotions were agoniz-

ing: he hid his face with his handkerchief, and with a hasty step ascended to his carriage, which, with a travelling chaise, was waiting at the door.

Lord Mortimer had left the convent about two hours, when his man arrived to dismiss the travelling chaise and attendants: I went out and enquired after his lord. "He is very bad, madam," said he, "and this has been a sad morning for us all." Never, my dear Miss Fitzalan, did I, or the the sisterhood, pass so melancholy a day. About five in the afternoon I received another visit from Lord Mortimer: one of his arms was in a sling. I was terrified lest he and Belgrave had met. He conjectured I fancy, the occasion of the terror my countenance expressed, for he immediately said he had been ill on returning to castle Carberry, and was bled. He was setting off directly for Dublin, he said, from whence he intended to embark for England. "But I could not depart, my dear friend," continued he, "without bidding you farewell; besides, I wanted to assure you, that any promise the unfortunate girl made in my name I shall hold sacred." He looked weak and exhausted. I begged permission to make tea for him ere he commenced his journey. He consented.

When he arose to depart he looked wavering and agitated, as if there was something on his mind he wanted to say. At last in a faltering voice, he said, "I left Miss Fitzalan's letter with you." Ah, my dear, never did man love woman better than he did, than he now loves you. I presented the letter to him. He put it in his bosom with an emotion that shook his whole frame. I hailed this as a favourable opportunity for again speaking in your favour; I bid him retrospect your past actions, and judge from them whether you could be guilty of a crime. He stopped me short; he begged me to drop a subject he was unable to bear. Had he been less credulous, he said, he should now have been much hap-

pier; then wringing my hand, he bid me farewell, in a voice and with a look that drew tears from me.

“I have heard much of the good he did in the neighbourhood: he has a bounteous and benevolent spirit, to our community he has been a liberal benefactor, and our prayers are daily offered up for his restoration to health and tranquillity. Amongst his other actions when in Dublin, about three months ago, he ordered a monument to the memory of Captain Fitzalan, which has been brought down since your departure, and put up in the parish church where he is interred. I sent sister Mary and another of the nuns the other evening to see it, and they brought me a description of it; it is a white marble urn, ornamented with a foliage of laurel, and standing upon a pedestal of grey, on which the name of the deceased, and words to the following effect are inscribed, namely, ‘That he, whose memory it perpetuates, performed the duties of a Christian and a soldier, with a fidelity and zeal that now warrants his enjoying a blessed recompense for both.’

“I am longing to hear from you. Pray tell me how you like Mrs. Macpherson; I have not seen her since her youth, and years often produce as great a change in the temper as the face; at any rate your present situation is too obscure for you to continue in. I hope you will be constant in writing; but I tell you beforehand, you must not expect me to be punctual in my answers: I have been so long disused to writing, and my eyes are grown so weak: this letter has been the work of many days; besides, I have really nothing interesting to write about; whenever I have, you may be sure I shall not loose a moment in informing you.

“The woman was extremely thankful for the five guineas you sent her, Lord Mortimer sent her five more, so that she thinks herself well rewarded for any trouble or disappointment she experienced.

“If possible, allow me to write to Lord Mortimer

and vindicate you from the unworthy suspicion he entertains of you ; I know he would believe me, and I should do so without discovering your retreat. Farewell, my dear girl ; I recommend you constantly to the care of heaven, and beg you to believe you will ever be dear and interesting to the heart of

St. Catherine's.

Elizabeth Dermot."

Poor Amanda wept over this letter. "I have ruined the health, and peace of Lord Mortimer," exclaimed she, "and he now execrates me as the source of his unhappiness. Oh! Lord Cherbury, how severely do I suffer for your crime!" she began to think her virtue had been too heroic in the sacrifice she had made; but this was a transient idea, for when she reflected on the disposition of Lord Cherbury, she was convinced the divulgement of his secret would have been followed by death, and, great as was her present wretchedness, she felt it light compared to the horrors she knew she would experience, could she accuse herself of being accessory to such an event. She resolved to caution Mrs. Dermot against mentioning her in any manner to Lord Mortimer. She was well convinced he would believe no asseveration of her innocence, and if he did, what end could it answer? "We are separated," cried she folding her arms together, "for ever separated in this world, but in heaven we shall be re-united."

The charm which had hitherto rendered Amanda's situation tolerable, was now dissolved, as Mrs. Dermot had said she could write but seldom; she would have gladly, therefore, have left Mrs. Macpherson immediately, but she knew not where to go. She resolved, however, before winter was entirely set in, to request Mrs. Dermot to look out for some other place for her, as she had relations in Scotland, she thought she might be able to recommend her to them as a governess, or a fit person to do fine work for a lady.

She rose long before her usual hour next morning and wrote a letter expressive of her wishes and intentions to Mrs. Dermot.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

Who knows the joys of friendship,
The trust, security, and mutual tenderness ;
The double joy, where each is glad for both ;
Friendship, our only wealth, our last retreat and strength,
Secure against ill fortune and the world ? *Rowe.*

AMONG Mrs. Macpherson's pupils were two little girls, who pleased and interested Amanda greatly. Their father, for whom they were in mourning, had perished in a violent storm, and their mother had pined in health and spirits ever since the fatal accident. The kindness with which Amanda treated them, they repaid with gratitude and attention ; it had a double effect upon their little hearts, from being contrasted with the sour austerity of Mrs. Macpherson. They told Amanda, in a whisper, one morning, that their mamma was coming to see their dear, good Frances Donald.

Accordingly in the course of the day, Mrs. Duncan came : she was young and pleasing in appearance : her weeds and deep dejection rendered her a most interesting object. She asked Amanda and Mrs. Macpherson to tea that evening, and the invitation was accepted. Mrs. Duncan lived at but a little distance, and every thing in and about the house was neat and comfortable. She had an old neighbour in the parlour, who kept Mrs. Macpherson in chat, and gave her an opportunity of conversing freely with Amanda. She remarked the delicacy of her looks, and said, " she believed she was ill qualified to endure so fatiguing a life as at present, she mentioned her own lonely and melancholy life, and the happiness she should derive from having such a companion, and expressed her hopes of often enjoying her society.

Amanda said this would be impossible without dis-obliging Mrs. Macpherson. Mrs. Duncan then enquired if she ever walked. Amanda replied she did, and was asked where she generally rambled. "By the sea side," she answered.

Mrs. Duncan sighed deeply, and her eyes filled with tears: "It is there I generally ramble too," said she. In short, between her and Amanda there appeared a mutual sympathy, which rendered them truly interesting to each other. From this period they generally met every evening, and passed many hours on the "sea-beat shore!" talking and often weeping over joys departed never to return. Mrs. Duncan was too delicate to enquire into Amanda's former situation: but was well convinced that it had been very different from her present one. Amanda, however, of her own accord, told her what she had told Mrs. Macpherson concerning herself. A month passed in this manner, when one evening Mrs. Duncan told her, "that she believed she should soon be quitting that part of the country. I have been invited, my dear girl," said she, leaning on her arm as they walked up and down the beach, "to reside with an aunt, who lives about ten miles from this, at an old place called Dunreath Abbey, of which she is the house-keeper: you have heard of it?" Amanda's agitation, at the mention of her mother's native habitation is not to be described, but recollecting herself, she replied she had heard of it. "Well then, my dear," continued Mrs. Duncan, "my aunt lives in great splendour there, and has the absolute command of every thing, as none of the family have resided at it since the Earl of Dunreath's decease, My aunt has lately grown weary of the solitude in which she lives, and has asked me, in a letter I received this morning, to go and reside with her, promising if I do, she will leave every thing she is worth to me and my children: this is a very tempting offer, and I am only withheld from accepting it directly by the fear of depriving

my children of the advantages of education : what I wish, is to procure a person who would at once be a pleasing companion to me, and an eligible governess for them."

She looked earnestly at Amanda as she spoke, whose heart began to throb with hope and agitation. "In short, my dear girl," continued she, "you, of all others, to be explicit, are the person I would choose to bring along with me : your sweet society would alleviate my sorrows, and your elegant accomplishments give to my children all the advantages I desire them to possess." "I am not flattered, but happy by your prepossession in my favour ;" replied Amanda.

"I am pleased we agree in point of inclination," said Mrs. Duncan, "but I must now inform you that my aunt has always been averse to admit any strangers to the Abbey, and she tells me in her letter, that if I accept her invitation I must not on any account let it be known where I am removing to. I dare not therefore bring you with me without her permission ; but I will write immediately, and request it. In the course of a day or two I may expect an answer : in the mean time give Mrs. Macpherson no intimation of our intentions, lest they should be defeated." Amanda promised she would not, and they separated.

Two evenings after her conversation with Mrs. Duncan, on going to the beach to meet her, Amanda saw her approaching with a letter in her hand, and a smile on her face, which informed her its contents were pleasing. They were so indeed, as they gave permission to have Amanda brought to the Abbey, provided she promised an inviolable secrecy as to where she was going. This Amanda cheerfully did, and Mrs. Duncan said she had some affairs to settle, which would prevent her departure for a few days : at whatever time she appointed, her aunt was to send a carriage for them, and it was now agreed that Mrs. Macpherson should be informed that Mrs. Duncan was leaving that part of the country, and had engaged Amanda as a governess.

The following day, after school broke up, Amanda informed Mrs. Macpherson of her intended departure. The old Lady was thunder-struck, and for some time unable to speak: but when she recovered the use of her tongue, she expressed the utmost rage and indignation against Amanda for leaving her in such a manner. Amanda assured her she could suffer no inconvenience from it, there being time enough to look out for another person ere she left. But the truth now broke from Mrs. Macpherson; angry as she was with Amanda, she could not help confessing that she never again expected to meet with a person so well qualified to please her, and a torrent of bitter reproaches again burst forth for her quitting her.

Amanda resented them not, but did all in her power to mollify her; as the most effectual method of doing so, she declared she meant to take no recompense for the time she had been with her, and added, if she had her permission, she would write that evening to Mrs. Dermot about a woman she had seen at the convent, whom she thought well qualified to be an assistant in her school. This was the woman who had been engaged to attend her to England. Mrs. Macpherson at last consented she should write for her, as her wrath had gradually subsided from the moment Amanda declared she would take no payment. Amanda accordingly wrote to Mrs. Dermot, and informed her of the agreeable change about to take place in her situation; also of Mrs. Macpherson's displeasure, and her own wish that a person might immediately be procured to fill her place. She mentioned the woman already spoken of as a fit person, but requested, if she consented to come, she might not be allowed to do so till she had left Mrs. Macpherson's, else who she really was would be betrayed. She received an answer from Ireland even sooner than she expected. Mrs. Dermot said the woman accepted the offer made in Mrs. Macpherson's name, but should not depart till she had written for that pur-

pose, and concluded her letter by saying, there was no intelligence of Lord Mortimer. Two days after the receipt of the letter Mrs. Duncan told Amanda their journey was fixed for the ensuing day, and begged her to sleep at her house that night, to which she gladly consented: accordingly after dinner, she took leave of Mrs. Macpherson, who grumbled out a farewell, and a hope that she might not have reason to repent leaving her, for the old lady was so incensed to have the place Mrs. Duncan was going to, concealed from her, that all her ill-humour had returned. Amanda, with a pleasure she could scarcely conceal, quitted her inhospitable roof, and soon found herself at Mrs. Duncan's. They rose early the next morning, and had just breakfasted, when the expected carriage from Dunreath Abbey arrived: it was a heavy old-fashioned chaise, on whose faded pannels the arms of the Dunreath family were still visible. The day was fine and serene; they travelled leisurely, for the horses had long outlived their mettlesome days.

CHAPTER XL.

My list'ning powers

Were awed, and ev'ry thought in silence hung,
And wond'ring expectation.

Akenside.

“MY dear Fanny,” said Mrs. Duncan, addressing our heroine by her borrowed name, “if at all inclined to superstition, you are now going to a place which will call it forth. Dunreath Abbey is gothic and gloomy in the extreme, and recalls to one's mind all the stories they have ever heard of haunted houses and apparitions; the desertion of its ancient inhabitants has hastened the depredations of time: yet what is the change in the building compared to the revolution which took place in the fortune of her who once beheld a prospect of being its mistress? the Earl of Dunreath's eldest daughter, as I have

often heard, was a celebrated beauty, and as good as she was handsome, but a malignant step-mother thwarted her happiness, and forced her to take shelter in the arms of a man who had every thing but fortune to recommend him : but in wanting that, he wanted everything to please her family. After some years of distress she found means to soften the heart of her father ; but here the invidious step-mother again interfered, and prevented her experiencing any good effects from his returning tenderness, and it was rumoured, by a deep and iniquitous scheme, deprived her of her birth-right. If Lady Dunreath in reality committed the crime she was accused of, she met in some degree a punishment for it. Soon after the Earl's death, she betrayed a partiality for a man every way her inferior, which partiality, people have not scrupled to say, commenced and was indulged, to a criminal degree, during the life-time of her husband. She would have married him, had not her daughter, the Marchioness of Rosline, interfered. Proud and ambitious, her rage at the prospect of such an alliance knew no bounds, and seconded by the Marquis, whose disposition was congenial to her own, they got the unfortunate mother into their power, and hurried her off to a convent in France. I know not whether she is yet living, indeed I believe there are few who either know or care, she was so much disliked for her haughty disposition. I have sometimes asked my aunt about her, but she would never gratify my curiosity. She has been brought up in the family, and no doubt thinks herself bound to conceal whatever they choose. She lives in ease and plenty, and is absolute mistress of the few domestics at the Abbey ; but of those domestics I caution you in time, or they will be apt to fill your head with frightful stories of the Abbey. They pretend that the Earl of Dunreath's first wife haunts the Abbey, venting the most piteous moans, which they ascribe to grief for the fate of her unfor-

tunate daughter, and that daughter's children being deprived of their rightful patrimony. I honestly confess, when at the Abbey a few years ago, I heard strange noises one evening as I walked in a gallery. I told my aunt of them, and she was quite angry at the terror I expressed, and said it was nothing but the wind whistling through an adjoining gallery which I heard. But this, my dear Fanny," said Mrs. Duncan, who on account of her children, had continued the latter part of her discourse in a low voice, "is all between ourselves; for my aunt declared she would never pardon my mentioning my ridiculous fears, or the yet more ridiculous fears of the servants, to any human being."

Amanda listened in silence to Mrs. Duncan's discourse, fearful if she spoke she should betray the emotions it excited.

They at last entered between the mountains that enclosed the valley in which the Abbey stood. The scene was solemn and solitary: every prospect, except one to the sea, seen through an aperture in the mountains, was excluded.

The carriage at last stopped before the Abbey. Mrs. Bruce was already at the door to receive them. She was a little smart old woman, and welcomed her niece and children with the greatest pleasure. On Amanda's being presented to her, she gazed steadfastly in her face a few minutes, and then exclaimed "Well, this is very strange, though I know I could never have seen this young lady before, her face is quite familiar to me."

Mrs. Bruce conducted them to a spacious parlour, terminated by an elegant saloon; this she told them had once been the banquetting room. The solemnity of the Abbey was well calculated to heighten the awe which stole over the mind of Amanda from the first view of it: no noise was heard throughout it, except the hoarse creaking of the massy doors, as the servants passed from one room to another, adjusting

Mrs. Duncan's things, and preparing for dinner. "And am I really," Amanda asked herself, "in the seat of my ancestors? Am I really in the habitation where my mother was born, where her irrevocable vows were plighted to my father? I am, and Oh! within it, may I at last find an asylum from the vices and dangers of the world: within it may my sorrowing spirit lose its agitation, and subdue, if not its affections, at least its murmurs."

The appearance of dinner interrupted her. She made exertions to overcome any appearance of dejection, and the conversation, if not lively, was at least cheerful. After dinner, Mrs. Duncan, who had been informed of Amanda's predilection for old buildings, asked her aunt's permission to show her the Abbey. Mrs. Bruce immediately arose, and said she would have that pleasure herself. She accordingly led the way: many of the apartments yet displayed the sumptuous taste of those who had furnished them. "It is astonishing to me," said Mrs. Duncan, "that so magnificent a pile as this should be abandoned, as I may say, by its possessers." "The Marquis of Rosline's castle is a more modern structure than this," said Mrs. Bruce, "and preferred by them on that account." "How far does the Marquis live from here?" asked Amanda. "About twelve miles," replied Mrs. Bruce, who now led the way to a long gallery, ornamented with portraits of the family. This gallery Amanda knew well by description: this was the gallery in which her father had stopped to contemplate the picture of her mother, and her heart throbbed with impatience and anxiety to see that picture.

Mrs. Bruce, as she went before her, told her the names of the different portraits. She suddenly stopped before one:—"That," cried she, "is the Marchioness of Rosline's, drawn for her when Lady Augusta Dunreath." Amanda cast her eyes upon it, and perceived in the countenance the same haugh-

ness as still distinguished the Marchioness. She looked at the next panel, and found it empty.

"The picture of Lady Malvina Dunreath hung there," said Mrs. Bruce, "but after her unfortunate marriage, it was taken down,"—"And destroyed," exclaimed Amanda mournfully. "No, but it was thrown into the old chapel, where, with the rest of the lumber (the soul of Amanda was struck at these words,)—it has been locked up for years." "And is it impossible to see it?" asked Amanda. "Impossible indeed," replied Mrs. Bruce, "the chapel and the whole of the eastern part of the Abbey has long been in a ruinous state, on which account it has been locked up." "This is the gallery," whispered Mrs. Duncan, "in which I heard the strange noises: but not a word of them to my aunt."

They returned from the gallery to the parlour, and in the course of conversation, Amanda heard many interesting anecdotes of her ancestors from Mrs. Bruce. Her mother also was mentioned, and Mrs. Bruce, by dwelling on her worth, made amends, in some degree, to Amanda, for having called her picture lumber. She retired to her chamber with her mind at once softened and elevated by hearing of her mother's virtues.

CHAPTER XLI.

Such on the ground the fading rose we see
By some rude blast torn from the parent tree!
The daffodil, so leans his languid head,
Newly mown down upon his grassy bed. *Blee.*

EXPERIENCE convinced Amanda that the change in her situation was, if possible, more pleasing than she expected it would be. Her mornings were devoted to her pupils, and in the evenings she sometimes walked with Mrs. Duncan, sometimes read aloud whilst she and her aunt were working: but whenever they were engaged in chatting about family affairs, or at a

game of piquet, which was often the case, she always took that opportunity of retiring from the room, and either rambled through the dark and intricate windings of the Abbey, or about the grounds contiguous to it; she sighed whenever she passed the chapel which contained the picture of her mother: it was in a ruinous condition, but a thick foliage of ivy partly hid, while it proclaimed its decay: the windows were broken in many places, but all too high to admit an entrance through them, and the door was strongly secured by massy bars of iron, as was every door which had a communication with the eastern part of the Abbey. A fortnight passed away at the Abbey without anything happening to disturb the tranquillity which reigned in it.

At the expiration of another week an event happened which again disturbed the composure of our heroine. Mrs. Bruce, one morning, hastily entered the room where she and Mrs. Duncan were sitting with the little girls, and begged they would not stir from it till she told them to do so, as the Marquis of Rosline's steward was below stairs, and if he knew of their residence at the Abbey, she was confident he would reveal it to his lord, which she had no doubt would occasion her own dismissal from it. The ladies assured her they would not leave the apartment, and she retired, leaving them astonished at the agitation she betrayed. In about two hours she returned, and said the steward had departed. "He has brought unexpected intelligence," said she, "the Marquis and his family are coming down to the castle; I must, therefore," continued she, addressing her niece, "send to the neighbouring town to procure lodgings for you till the family leave the country, as no doubt some of them will come to the Abbey, and to find you in it, would, I can assure you, be attended with unpleasant consequences to me."

Mrs. Duncan begged "she would not suffer the least uneasiness on her account, and proposed that

very day leaving the Abbey." "No," Mrs. Bruce replied, "there was no necessity for quitting it for a few days longer; the family," continued she, "are coming down upon a joyful occasion, to celebrate the nuptials of the Marquis' daughter, Lady Euphrasia Sutherland." "Lady Euphrasia's nuptials!" exclaimed Amanda, in an agitated voice, and forgetting her own situation; "to whom is she to be married?" "To Lord Mortimer," Mrs. Bruce replied, "the Earl of Cherbury's only son, a very fine young man. I am told the affair has been long talked of, but—" Here she was interrupted by a deep sigh, or rather groan, from the unfortunate Amanda, who at the same moment fell back on her chair, pale and without motion. Mrs. Duncan screamed and flew to her assistance. Mrs. Bruce, equally frightened, though less affected, ran for restoratives, and the children clasped her knees and wept. From her pensive look and manner, Mrs. Duncan suspected from their first acquaintance, that her heart had experienced a disappointment of the tenderest nature. Her little girls too had told her that they had seen Miss Donald crying over a picture. Her suspicions concerning such a disappointment, were now confirmed by the sudden emotion and illness of Amanda: but she had all the delicacy which belongs to true sensibility, and determined never to let Amanda know she conjectured the source of her sorrows, certain as she was that they had never originated in any misconduct.

Mrs. Bruce's drops restored Amanda's senses: but she felt weak and trembling, and begged she might be supported to her chamber to lie down on the bed. Mrs. Bruce and Mrs. Duncan accordingly led her to it. The former almost immediately retired, and the tears of Amanda now burst forth. She wept a long time without intermission, and as soon as her sobs would allow her to speak, begged Mrs. Duncan to leave her to herself.

The wretched Amanda then asked herself, "if she

had not known before, that the sacrifice she made to Lord Cherbury would lead to the event she now regretted. Oh! Mortimer, beloved of my soul!" cried she, "were you going to be united to a woman sensible of your worth, and worthy of your noble heart, in the knowledge of your happiness, my misery would be lessened: but what an union of misery must yours and Lady Euphrasia's form! Alas! am I not wretched enough in contemplating my own prospect of unhappiness, but yours too must be obtruded on me? Yet perhaps," she continued, "the evils I dread on Lord Mortimer's account, may be averted!—Oh! that they may," said she, with fervour, and raising her hands and eyes, "soften, gracious heaven! soften the flinty nature of Lady Euphrasia, O! render her sensible of the blessing you bestow, in giving her Lord Mortimer, and render her not only capable of inspiring, but of feeling tenderness."

Her spirits were a little elevated by the fervency of her language: but it was a transient elevation: the flush it spread over her cheek soon died away, and her tears began to flow.

"Alas!" she cried, "in a few days, it will be criminal to think on Lord Mortimer as I have hitherto done, and I shall blush," continued she, gazing at his picture, "to contemplate this dear shadow, when I reflect its original is the husband of Lady Euphrasia."

The dinner bell now sounded through the Abbey. She started, and hastily wiped away her tears, went down to the parlour. She could not eat; with difficulty could she restrain her tears, or answer the enquiries Mrs. Bruce made after what she supposed a mere bodily indisposition. She forced herself however, to continue in the parlour till after tea, when cards being produced, she had an opportunity of going out, and indulging her anguish without fear of interruption. Unable, however, to walk far, she repaired to the old chapel, and sitting down by it,

leaned her head against its broken and ivy-covered walls. She had scarcely sat in this manner a minute, when the stones gave way with a noise which terrified her, and she would have fallen backward, had she not caught at some projecting wood. She hastily rose, and found that the ivy entirely concealed the breach. She examined it however, and found it large enough to admit her into the chapel. A sudden pleasure pervaded her heart at the idea of being able to enter it, and examine the picture she had so long wished to behold. There was nothing to oppose her entrance but the ivy. This she parted with difficulty, but so as not to strip it from the wall, and after stepping over the fallen rubbish, she found herself in the body of the chapel. The silent hour of twilight was now advanced, but the moon-beams that darted through the broken roof, prevented the chapel from being involved in utter darkness. Already had the owls begun their strains of melancholy on its mouldering pillars, while the ravens croaked amongst the luxuriant trees that rustled round it; dusty and moth-eaten banners were suspended from the walls, and rusty casques, shields, and spears were promiscuously heaped together, the useless armour of those, over whose remains Amanda now trod with a light and trembling foot; she looked for the picture and perceived one reclined against the wall near the altar. She wiped away the dust, and perceived this was indeed the one she sought; the one her father had so often described to her; the light was too imperfect for her to distinguish the features, and she resolved, if possible, to come at an earlier hour the ensuing evening. She felt impressed with reverential awe as she stood before it. She recollected the pathetic manner in which her father had mentioned his emotions as he gazed upon it, and her tears began to flow for the disastrous fate of her parents and her own. She remained till the striking of the Abbey clock warned her to depart. In going towards

the entrance, she perceived a small arched door at the opposite side : as the apartments Lady Malvina had occupied were in this part of the building, she resolved on visiting them before she left the Abbey, lest the breach in the wall should be discovered ere they returned to it. She returned to the parlour ere the ladies had finished their game of piquet, and the next evening, immediately after tea, repaired to the chapel, leaving them engaged, as usual, at cards. She stood a few minutes before it, to see if any one was near; but perceiving no object, she again entered it,—she had now sufficient light to examine the picture; though faded by the damp, it yet retained that loveliness for which its original was so admired, and which her father had often so eloquently described to her. She contemplated it with awe, love, and pity. Her heart swelled with the emotions it excited, and gave way to its feelings in tears. To weep before the shade of her mother, seemed to assuage the bitterness of her feelings; she pronounced the name of her parents, she called herself their wretched orphan, a stranger, and a dependant in the mansion of her ancestors. She pronounced the name of Mortimer in the impassioned accents of tenderness and distress; as she thus indulged the sorrows of her soul in tears and lamentations, she suddenly heard a faint noise, like an advancing footstep near her. She started up, for she had been kneeling before her mother's picture, terrified lest her visit to the chapel had been discovered, which she knew, if the case, would mortally disoblige Mrs. Bruce, though why she should be so averse to any one's visiting it, she could not conceive. She listened in trembling anxiety for a few minutes; all again was still, and she returned to the parlour, where she found the ladies as she had left them, determined, notwithstanding her late fright, to return the next evening to the chapel, and visit the apartments that were her mother's.

CHAPTER XLII.

What beck'ning ghost along the moon-light shade
Invites thy steps ?

Pope.

THE next evening Amanda's patience was put to the test: for after tea, Mrs. Duncan proposed a walk, which seemed to cut off her hopes of visiting the chapel that evening: but after strolling for some time about the valley, complaisance for her aunt made Mrs. Duncan return to the parlour, where she was expected to take her usual hand at piquet. The hour was late, and the sky so gloomy, that the moon, though at its full, could scarcely penetrate the darkness: but notwithstanding this, Amanda hurried to the chapel, and entering the little arched door, found herself in a lofty hall, in the centre of which was a grand stair-case, the whole enlightened by a large gothic window at the head of the stairs. She ascended them with trepidation, for her footsteps produced a hollow echo which added something awful to the gloom that enveloped her. On gaining the top of the stairs, she saw two large folding-doors on either side, both closed. She knew the direction to take, and, by a small effort of strength, pulled the one on the left side open, and perceived a long gallery, which she knew was terminated by the apartments she wanted to visit. Its almost total darkness, however, nearly conquered her wish, and shook her resolution for proceeding: but ashamed to give way to superstitious fear, she advanced into the gallery, and as she let the door out of her hand, it shut to with a violence that shook the whole building. Amanda's heart began to beat with unusual quickness, and she thought she should never reach the end of the gallery. She at last came to a door, it was closed, not fastened: she pushed it gently open, and could just discern a spacious room; this she supposed had been her mo-

ther's dressing-room: the moon-beams, as if to aid her wish of examining it, suddenly darted through the casement. Cheered by the unexpected light, she advanced into the room: at the upper end of it something in white attracted her notice: she concluded it to be the portrait of Lady Malvina's mother, which she had been informed hung in this room. She went to examine it: but her horror may be better conceived than described, when she found herself, not by a picture, but by the real form of a woman, with a death-like countenance! She screamed wildly at the terrifying spectre, for such she believed it to be, and quick as lightning, flew from the room. Again was the moon obscured by a cloud, and she involved in utter darkness. She ran with such violence, that, as she reached the door at the end of the gallery, she fell against it. Extremely hurt, she had not power to move for a few minutes: but while she involuntarily paused, she heard approaching footsteps. Wild with terror, she instantly recovered her faculties, and attempted opening it; but it resisted all her efforts. "Protect me, heaven!" she exclaimed, and at the moment felt an icy hand upon hers. Her senses instantly forsook her, and she sank to the floor. When she recovered from her insensibility, she perceived a glimmering light around her. She opened her eyes with fearfulness, but no object appeared, and to her great joy, she saw the door standing open, and found that the light proceeded from the large window. She instantly arose, and descended the stairs with as much haste as her trembling limbs could make: but again, what was her horror when, on entering the chapel, the first object she beheld was the same that had already alarmed her so much? She made a spring to escape through the entrance, but the apparition, with a rapidity equal to her own, glided before her, and with a hollow voice, as she waved an emaciated hand, exclaimed, "Forbear to go."

A deadly faintness again came over Amanda; she

sank upon a broken seat, and put her hand over her eyes to shut out the frightful vision.

"Lose," continued the figure, in a hollow voice, "lose your superstitious fears, and in me behold, not an airy inhabitant of the other world, but a sinful, sorrowful, and repentant woman."

The terrors of Amanda gave way to this unexpected address; but her surprise was equal to what those terrors had been: she withdrew her hand and gazed attentively on the form before her.

"If my eye, if my ear deceive me not," it continued, "you are a descendant of the Dunreath family. I heard you last night, when you imagined no being near, call yourself the unfortunate orphan of Lady Malvina Fitzalan."—"I am indeed her child," replied Amanda. "Tell me then by what chance you were brought hither? you called yourself a stranger and a dependant in the house of your ancestors." "I am both," said Amanda, "my real name is concealed from circumstances peculiarly distressing, and I have been brought to the Abbey as an instructress to two children related to the person who takes care of it." "My prayers at length," exclaimed the ghastly figure, "my prayers have reached the Throne of Mercy, and, as a proof that my repentance is accepted, power is given me to make reparation for the injuries I have committed. Oh! thou," she cried, turning to Amanda, "whose form revives in my remembrance the youth and beauty, blasted by my means, if thy mind, as well as thy face, resembles Lady Malvina's, thou wilt in pity to my sufferings, forbear to reproach my crimes. In me," she continued, "you behold the guilty but contrite widow of the Earl of Dunreath."

Amanda started, "Oh, gracious heaven!" she exclaimed, "can this be possible?" "Have you not been taught to execrate my name?" asked the unhappy woman. "Oh! no," replied Amanda. "No," replied Lady Dunreath, "because your mother was

an angel ; but did she not leave a son ?” “ Yes,” said Amanda. “ And does he live ?” “ Alas ! I do not know,” replied Amanda, melting into tears, “ distress separated us, and he is not more ignorant of my destiny than I am of his.” “ It is I,” exclaimed Lady Dunreath, “ have been the cause of this distress ; it is I, sweet and sainted Malvina, have been the cause of calamity to your children, but blessed be the working hand of Providence,” she continued, “ which has given me an opportunity of making some amends for my cruelty and injustice. But,” she proceeded, “ as I know the chance which led you to the chapel, I dread to detain you any longer, lest it should lead to a discovery. Were it known that you saw me, all my intentions would be defeated : be secret then, I conjure you, more on your own account than my own, and let not Mrs. Bruce have the smallest intimation of what has passed : but return to me to-morrow night, and you shall receive from me a sacred deposit, which will, if affluence can do it, render you completely happy. In the meantime do you throw upon paper a brief account of your life, that I may know the incidents which so providentially brought you to the Abbey.”

Amanda promised to obey her in every respect, and the unfortunate woman, unable longer to speak, kissed her hand, and retired through the little arched door. Amanda left the chapel, and full of wonder, pity, and expectation, moved mechanically to the parlour. Mrs. Bruce and Mrs. Duncan had but just risen from cards. Amanda begged leave to retire to her chamber. The surprising and interesting discovery she had made, had so agitated her, that she could scarcely compose herself enough to take up a pen to narrate the particulars of her life, as Lady Dunreath had requested. She sketched them in a brief, yet hasty manner, sufficiently strong however to interest a sympathetic heart ; the tender and peculiar sorrows of her own she omitted. The next

evening was far advanced ere she had an opportunity of repairing to the chapel, where she found the unfortunate Lady Dunreath resting in an attitude of deep despondence against the rails of the altar.

Her pale and woe-worn countenance,—her emaciated form—her solitary situation—all inspired Amanda with the tenderest compassion, and she dropped a tear upon the cold and withered hand which was extended to hers, as she approached. “I merit not the tear of pity,” said the unhappy woman, “yet it casts a gleam of comfort on my heart to meet with a being who feels for its sorrows; but the moments are precious.” She then led Amanda to the altar, and stooping down, desired her assistance in removing a small marble flag beneath it. This being erected with difficulty, Amanda perceived an iron box which she also assisted in raising. Lady Dunreath then took a key from her bosom, with which she opened it, and took from thence a sealed paper. “Receive,” said she, presenting it to Amanda, “receive the will of your grandfather, a sacred deposit, entrusted to your care for your brother, the rightful heir of the Earl of Dunreath. Oh! may its restoration, and my sincere repentance, atone for its long detention and concealment.”

Trembling with joyful surprise, Amanda received the paper: “Gracious heaven!” exclaimed she, “is it possible? Do I really hold the will of my grandfather,—a will which will entitle my brother to affluence? Oh, Providence, how mysterious are thy ways! But let me not neglect this opportunity,” continued, she, addressing Lady Dunreath, “of enquiring if there is any way in which I can possibly serve you. Is there no friend to whom I could apply in your name, to have you released from this cruel and unjustifiable confinement?” “No,” said Lady Dunreath, “no such friend exists: when I had the power to do so, I never conciliated friendship. The laws of my country would certainly liberate me at once; but if things turn out

as I expect, there will be no occasion for them : your future prosperity, my present safety, all depend on secrecy for a short period.—In this paper," drawing one from her pocket and presenting it to Amanda, "I have explained my reason for desiring such secrecy." Amanda put it with the will into her bosom, and gave in return the little narrative she had sketched. They both assisted in replacing the box and flag, and then seated themselves on the steps of the altar.—Amanda informed Lady Dunreath of her departure the next day from the Abbey, and the occasion of it. Lady Dunreath expressed the utmost impatience to have every thing put in a proper train for the avowal of the will, declaring that the sight of the rightful heir in possession of the Abbey, would calm the agitations of a spirit, which, she believed, would soon forsake its earthly habitation.

Absorbed in a kind of sympathetic melancholy, they forgot the danger of delay till the Abbey clock chimed half past ten, (which was later than Mrs. Bruce's usual hour of supper,) startled and alarmed them both. "Go, go," cried Lady Dunreath, with a wild expression of fear, "go, or we are undone." Amanda pressed her hand in silence, and trembling, departed from the chapel. She stopped at the outside to listen, for by her ear alone could she now receive any intimation of danger, as the night was too dark to permit any object to be discerned ; but the breeze sighing among the trees of the valley, and the melancholy murmur of the waterfalls, were all the sounds to be heard. She groped along the wall of the chapel to keep in the path, and in so doing, passed her hand over the cold face of a human being : terrified, an involuntary scream burst from her, and she faintly articulated ; "Heaven defend me." In the next moment she was seized round the waist, and her senses were receding, when Mrs. Duncan's voice recalled them. She apologized to Amanda for giving her such a fright : but said, "that her uneasiness was

so great at her long absence that, attended by a servant, she had come in quest of her."

Mrs. Duncan's voice relieved Amanda from the horror of thinking she had met with a person who would insult her : but it had given rise to a new alarm. She feared she had been traced to the chapel, that her discourse with Lady Dunreath had been overheard, and of course the secret of the will discovered, and that Mrs. Duncan, amiable as she was, might sacrifice friendship to interest and consanguinity. This idea overwhelmed her with anguish : her deep and heavy sighs, her violent trembling alarmed Mrs. Duncan, who hastily called the servant to assist her in supporting Amanda home : drops were then administered, but they would have wanted their usual efficacy with the poor night wanderer, had she not soon been convinced by Mrs. Duncan's manner, she had not made the dreaded discovery.

It was late ere the ladies separated for the night, and as soon as Amanda had secured the door of her chamber, she drew from her bosom the papers so carefully deposited in it, and sat down to peruse the narrative of Lady Dunreath.

CHAPTER XLIII.

For true repentance never comes too late ;
 As swift as born she makes herself a shroud,
 The weeping mantle of a fleecy cloud.
 As swift as thought her airy journey takes,
 Her hand Heav'n's azure gate with trembling strikes.
 The stars do with amazement on her look :
 She tells her story in so sad a tone,
 That angels start from bliss, and give a groan.— *Icc.*

"ADORING the Power who has given me the means of making restitution for my injustice, I take up my pen, to disclose to your view, oh ! lovely orphan of the injured Malvina, the frailties of a heart which has long been tortured with the retrospect of past and the pressure of present evils. Many years are

now elapsed since the commencement of my confinement, years which diminished my hopes of being able to make reparation for the injustice and cruelty I had done to Lady Malvina Fitzalan, but left unabated my desire of doing so.

“My cruelty to Lady Malvina you, no doubt, already know: in my conduct to her, I forgot the obligations her mother had conferred on me, whose patronage and kind protection laid the foundation of my prosperity. I rejoiced at her marriage with Captain Fitzalan, as a step that would deprive her of her father’s favour, and place her in that state of poverty which would conceal charms I detested for being superior to my daughter’s.—The Earl’s resentment was violent at first: but with equal surprise and concern, I soon perceived it gradually subsiding; the irrevocableness of the deed, the knowledge that he wanted no acquisition of fortune; above all, Fitzalan’s noble descent, and the graces and virtues he possessed, worthy of the highest station, dwelt upon the Earl’s imagination, and pleaded strongly in extenuation of his daughter; alarmed lest my schemes against her should be rendered abortive, like an evil spirit I contrived to rekindle, by means of agents, the Earl’s resentment, and at last, he declared in future Lady Malvina should be considered as an alien to his family.

“I now hoped my ambitious views relative to my daughter, would be accomplished; I had long wished her united to the Marquis of Rosline; but he had for years been Lady Malvina’s admirer, and was so much attached to her, that on her marriage he went abroad. My arts were then tried to prevail on the Earl to make a will in Lady Augusta’s favour; but this was a point I could not accomplish, and I lived in continual apprehension lest his dying intestate should give Lady Malvina the fortune I wanted to deprive her of. Anxious, however, to procure a splendid establishment for my daughter, I every-

where said, there was no doubt she would be sole heiress to the Earl. At the expiration of three years the Marquis returned to his native country: his unfortunate passion was subdued, he heard and believed the reports I circulated, and stimulated by avarice, offered his hand to my daughter, and was accepted. The Earl gave her a large portion in ready money; but notwithstanding all my endeavours, would not make a settlement of any of his estate on her.—My daughter's nuptials increased my natural haughtiness: they also increased my love of pleasure, by affording me more ample means of gratifying it at the sumptuous entertainments at the Marquis' castle; engaged continually in them, the Earl, whose infirmities confined him to the Abbey, was left to solitude, and the care of his domestics; though his body was a prey to the infirmities of age, his mind knew none of its imbecilities, and he sensibly felt, and secretly resented my neglect; the more he reflected on it, the more he contrasted it with the attention he was accustomed to receive from his banished Malvina, and the resentment I had hitherto kept alive in his mind against her gradually subsided, so that he was well prepared to give a favourable reception to the little innocent advocate she sent to plead her cause. My preventing your brother from again gaining access to his grandfather, and my repulsing your mother when she requested an interview with the Earl, I suppose you already know:—yet, almost at the moment I committed so cruel an action, she was avenged. No language can describe my horror as conscience represented to me the barbarity of my conduct. I trembled with involuntary fears; sounds had power to terrify: every blast which shook the Abbey (and dreadful was the tempest of that night) made me shrink, as if about to meet with an instantaneous punishment.

I trembled at my undivulged crimes
Unwhipt of justice——

“I knew the Earl expected either to see or hear from your mother : he was ignorant of the reception they had met with from me, and I was determined if possible he should continue so. As soon as certified of Lady Malvina’s departure from the neighbourhood of the Abbey, I contrived a letter in Captain Fitzalan’s name, to the Earl, filled with the most cutting and insolent reproaches to him for his conduct to his daughter, and imputing her departure from Scotland to it. These unjust reproaches I trusted would irritate the Earl, and work another revolution in his mind, but I was disappointed : he either believed the letter a forgery, or else resolved the children should not suffer for the fault of the parent ; he accordingly sent for his agent, an eminent lawyer in one of the neighbouring towns. This man was lately deceased, but his son, bred to the profession, obeyed the summons to the Abbey. I dreaded his coming, but scarcely had I seen him ere this dread was lost in emotions till then unknown : a soft, a tender, an ardent passion took possession of my heart on beholding a man, in the very prime of life, adorned with every natural and acquired grace that could please the eye and ear. Married at an early period, possessed of all the advantages of art, said and believing myself handsome, I flattered myself I might on his heart make an impression equal to that he had done on mine : if so, I thought how easily could the Earl’s intentions, in favour of his daughter, be defeated. A will was made, but my new ideas and schemes divested me of any uneasiness about it.—Melross continued at the Abbey much longer than he need have done, and when he left it, his absence was of short continuance. The Earl’s business was his pretext for his so long and frequent visits : but the real motives of them he soon discovered to me, encouraged no doubt by the partiality I betrayed. I shall not dwell upon this part of my story, but I completed my crime by violating my conjugal fidelity, and we en-

tered into an engagement to be united whenever I was at liberty, which, from the infirm state of the Earl, I now believed would shortly be the case. In consequence of this, Melross agreed to put the Earl's will into my hands, which had been entrusted to his care, and he acknowledged drawn up entirely in favour of Lady Malvina Fitzalan and her offspring. It was witnessed by friends of his, whom he had no doubt of bribing to silence. You may wonder that the will was not destroyed as soon as I had it in my possession: by keeping it in my hands I trusted I should have a power over my daughter, which duty and affection had never yet given me. About a year after the commencement of my attachment for Melross, the Earl expired, and the Marchioness inherited his possessions by means of a forged will, executed by Melross; ignorant indeed at the time that it was by iniquity she obtained them, though her conduct since that period has proved she would not have suffered any compunction from such a knowledge. I removed from the Abbey to an estate about fifteen miles from it, which the Earl had left me, and here, much sooner than decency would have warranted, avowed my intention of marrying Melross, to the Marquis and Marchioness of Rosline. The consequences of this avowal were pretty much what I had expected.—The Marquis, more by looks than words, expressed his contempt; but the Marchioness openly declared her indignation. Her words roused all the violence of my soul: I upbraided her with ingratitude to a parent who had stept beyond the bounds of rigid propriety to give her an increase of fortune. My words alarmed her and the Marquis. They hastily demanded an explanation of them. I did not hesitate in giving one, protesting at the same time that I would no longer hurt my feelings on their account, as I found no complaisance to my wishes, but immediately avow Lady Malvina Fitzalan the lawful heiress of the Earl of Dunreath. The Marquis and

Marchioness changed colour: I saw they trembled lest I should put my threats into execution, though with consummate art, they pretended not to believe such a will as I mentioned existed.

“ I retired to my chamber, secretly exulting at the idea of having conquered all opposition, for I plainly perceived by the Marquis and Marchioness’ manner, they were convinced it was in my power to deprive them of their newly acquired possessions, which to secure, I doubted not their sacrificing their pride to my wishes; I exulted at the idea of having my nuptials with Melross celebrated with that splendour I always delighted in, and the prospect of having love and vanity gratified, filled me with a kind of intoxicating happiness. A few hours after I had retired to my room, the Marchioness sent to request an interview with me, which I readily granted. She entered the apartment with a respectful air, very unusual to her, and immediately made an apology for her late conduct. I accompanied her to the Marquis; a general reconciliation took place, and Melross was presented to them. In about two days after this, the Marchioness came into my dressing-room one morning, and told me she had a proposal to make which she hoped would be agreeable to me to comply with. It was the Marquis’ intention and hers to go immediately to the continent, and they had been thinking, if Melross and I would favour them with our company, we had better defer our nuptials till we reached Paris, which was the first place they intended visiting, as their solemnization in Scotland so soon after the Earl’s decease might displease his friends, by whom we were surrounded, and on their return, which would be soon, they would introduce Melross to their connections, as a man every way worthy of their notice. After some little hesitation I agreed to this plan. Melross submitted cheerfully to our new arrangements, and it was farther settled, to preserve appearances, that he should go

before us to Paris. I supplied him with everything requisite to make a splendid appearance, and counted the moments with impatience for rejoining him. As had been settled, we commenced our journey a month after his departure. It was now the middle of winter, and ere we stopped for the night, darkness had veiled the earth; fatigued, and almost exhausted by the cold, I followed the Marquis through a long passage, lighted by a glimmering light, to a parlour which was well lighted, and had a comfortable fire. I started with amazement at finding myself in a place I thought familiar to me, and could not help expressing it to the Marquis.—‘Your eyes, madam,’ cried he, with a cruel solemnity, ‘have not deceived you, for you are now in Dunreath Abbey.’ ‘Dunreath Abbey!’ I repeated, ‘Gracious heaven! what can be the meaning of this?’ ‘To hide your folly, your imprudence, your deceit, from the world,’ he exclaimed. ‘And do you then, in a country like this,’ I cried, ‘dare to think you can deprive me of liberty?’ ‘Yes,’ replied he, with insulting coolness, ‘when it is known you are incapable of making a proper use of that liberty; you should thank me,’ he continued, ‘for palliating your late conduct by imputing it rather to a mental derangement than to total depravity; from what other source than the former, could you have asserted that there was a will in Lady Malvina Fitzalan’s favour?’ ‘Oh! would to heaven,’ cried I, ‘I had proved my assertion; had I done justice to others, I should not have been entangled in the snare of treachery.’ ‘Prove your assertion now,’ said he, ‘by showing me the will, and you may, perhaps,’ he continued in a hesitating voice, ‘find your doing so attended with pleasing consequences.’ Rage and scorn flashed from my eyes at these words. ‘No,’ cried I, ‘had you the power of torturing, you should not tear it from me. I will keep it to atone for my sins, and expose yours to view by restoring it to the rightful owner.’ I de-

manded my liberty, I threatened, supplicated, but all in vain. The Marquis told me, 'I might as well compose myself, for my fate was decided.' I called for my daughter.—'You will see her no more,' he replied, 'the passion she has so long blushed to behold she will no more witness.' Convinced that I was entirely in the Marquis' power, convinced that I had nothing to hope from him nor my daughter, rage, horror, and agony, at their unjust and audacious treatment, kindled in my breast a sudden phrenzy, which strong convulsions only terminated. When I recovered from them, I found myself on a bed in a room the late Lady Dunreath had occupied. Mrs. Bruce sat beside me, I bid her, with a haughty air, which I hoped would awe her into obedience, 'assist me in rising, and procure me some conveyance from the Abbey without delay.' The Marquis entered the chamber as I spoke. 'Compose yourself, madam,' said he, 'your destiny, I repeat it, is irrevocable: this Abbey is your future residence: it behoves both the Marchioness and me, indeed, to seclude a woman who might cast imputations on our characters, which those unacquainted with us might believe.' I started from the bed, in the loose dress they had put on me, and demanded my liberty. The Marquis heard my demand with a contemptuous smile, and quitted the room. I attempted to rush after him, but he pushed me back with violence, and closed the door. My feelings again brought on convulsions, which terminated in delirium and fever. In this situation the Marquis and Marchioness abandoned me. Many weeks elapsed ere I showed any symptoms of recovery. The first object my eyes beheld, on regaining my senses, was Mrs. Bruce bending over my pillow, with a look of anxiety and grief.

"Tell me," said I faintly, "am I really in Dunreath Abbey, am I really confined within its walls by the order of my child?"

“Mrs. Bruce sighed. ‘Do not disturb yourself with vain questions now,’ said she, ‘the reason heaven has so mercifully restored, would be ill employed in vain murmurs!’ ‘Vain murmurs,’ I repeated, and a deep desponding sigh burst from my heart. I lay silent a long time after this; the gloom which encompassed me, at length grew too dreary to be borne, and I desired Mrs. Bruce to draw back the curtains of the bed and window, she obeyed, and the bright beams of the sun darting into the room, displayed to my view an object I could not behold without shuddering; this was the portrait of Lady Dunreath exactly opposite the bed. My mind was softened by illness, and I felt in that moment as if her sainted spirit stood before me to awaken my conscience to remorse, and my heart to repentance.

“The change in my disposition produced a similar one in my temper, so that Mrs. Bruce found the task of attending me easier than she imagined it would be; yet I did not submit to confinement without many efforts to liberate myself through her means; but her fidelity to her unnatural employers was not to be shaken. Blushing, however, for my past enormities, I should rather have shrunk from than solicited admission again into the world, had not my ardent desire of making reparation to the descendants of Lady Dunreath influenced me to desire freedom. Oh! never did that desire cease—never did a morning dawn, an evening close, without entreating heaven to allow me the means of restoring to the injured their inheritance. Mrs. Bruce, though steady, was not cruel, and nursed me with the tenderest attention till my health was re-established: she then ceased to see me except at night; but took care I should always be amply stocked with necessaries. She supplied me with religious and moral books; also materials for writing if I choose to comment upon them. Debarred of the common enjoyments of life, air, exercise and society, nature repined,

and a total langour seized me. Mrs. Bruce at last told me I should be allowed the range of that part of the building in which I was confined, (for I had been hitherto limited to one room) and consequently air from the windows, if I promised to make no attempt for recovering my freedom, an attempt, she assured me, would prove abortive, as none but people attached to the Marquis lived in or about the Abbey, who would immediately betray me to him, and if he ever detected such a step, it was his determination to hurry me to France.

“Certain that he would be capable of such baseness, touched by the smallest indulgence, and eager to procure any recreation, I gave her the most solemn assurances of never attempting to make known my situation. She accordingly unlocked the several doors that had hitherto impeded my progress from one apartment to another, and removed the iron bolts which secured the shutters of the windows.

“The will I shall deliver you to-night; I advise you, if your brother cannot immediately be found, to put it into the hands of some man on whose abilities and integrity you can rely: but till you meet with such a person, beware of discovering you have it in your possession, lest the Marquis should remove from your knowledge the penitent, whose testimony to the validity of the deed will be so cheerfully given, and is so materially essential. As much as possible I wish to have my daughter saved from public disgrace. From me you will say she merits not this lenient wish; but, alas! I hold myself accountable for her misconduct; entrusted to my care by providence, I neglected the sacred charge, nor ever curbed a passion, nor laid the foundation of a virtue.

“Mrs. Bruce informed me that the Marquis had written to Melross, informing him that I had changed my mind, and she supposed he had procured some pleasant establishment in France, as no one had ever heard of his returning from it. She made

several attempts to prevail on me to give up the will to her ; but I resisted all her arts, and was rejoiced to think I had concealed it in a place which would never be suspected.

“ I cannot forbear describing what I felt on first hearing your voice—a voice so like in its harmonious tones to one I knew had long been silent ; impressed with an awful dread, I stood upon the stairs, which I was descending to visit the chapel, as was my custom at the close of the day, shivering and appalled, I had not for a few minutes power to move ; but when I at last ventured nearer the door, and saw you kneeling before the dust covered shade of her I had injured, when I heard you call yourself her wretched orphan, oh ! what were my emotions ? an awful voice seemed sounding in my ear—Behold the hour of restoration is arrived ! The way by which I saw you quit my retirement, proved to me your entrance was unknown ; with an impatience, bordering on agony, I waited for the next evening ; it came without bringing you, and no language can express my disappointment ! Dejected, I returned to my chamber, which you entered soon after, and where you received so great a fright ; yet, be assured, not a greater one than I experienced, for the gleam of moonlight which displayed you to me, gave you full to my view, and I beheld the very form and face of Lady Malvina. In form and face may you alone resemble her ; different, far different, be your destiny from hers. Soon may your brother be restored to your arms. Should he then shudder at my name, oh ! teach him, with a mercy like your own, to accord me forgiveness. Resolute of doing justice to the utmost of my power, I am ready, whenever I am called upon, to bear evidence to the validity of the will I shall deliver into your possession. Soon may all it entitles you to be restored, is the sincere prayer of her, who subscribes herself,

Truly penitent,
Annabella Dunreath.”

CHAPTER XLIV.

Cease then, ah, cease, fond mortal to repine
 At laws, which nature wisely did ordain;
 Pleasure, what is it? rightly to define,
 'Tis but a short-lived interval from pain;
 Or, rather each alternately renew'd.
 Gives to our lives a sweet vicissitude. *Brown.*

THE emotions Amanda experienced from reading this narrative, deeply affected but gradually subsided from her mind, leaving it only occupied by pity for the penitent Lady Dunreath, and pleasure at the prospect of Oscar's independence: a pleasure so pure, so fervent, that it had power to steal her from her sorrows, and when the recollection of them again returned, she endeavoured to banish it by thinking of the necessity there was for immediately adopting some plan for the disclosure of the will Lady Dunreath had advised her to put into the hands of a friend of integrity and ability.

"But where," cried the desolate Amanda, "can I find such a friend?" The few, the very few whom she had reason to think regarded her, had neither power nor ability to assist her in what would probably be an arduous demand for restitution. After sitting a considerable time in deep meditation, the idea of Rushbrook suddenly occurred, and she started, as if in joyful surprise at the remembrance: she considered that though almost a stranger to him, an application of such a nature must rather be regarded as a compliment than a liberty, from the great opinion it would prove she had of his honour by intrusting him with such a secret. From his looks and manner she was convinced that he would not only deeply feel for the injured, but ably advise how those injuries should be redressed. He also, she trusted, would be able to put her in a way of making enquiries after Oscar.

The morning surprised Amanda in the midst of her meditations. She thought not of undressing herself; but tried to get a little rest, and soon sunk into a gentle sleep, from which she awoke with renovated spirits near the breakfast hour.

Mrs. Bruce expressed the utmost regret at the necessity there was for parting with her guests: but added, "that she believed, as well as hoped, their absence from her would be but short, as she was sure the Marquis' family would leave Scotland almost immediately after Lady Euphrasia's nuptials." In vain did Amanda struggle for fortitude to support the mention of these nuptials: her frame trembled, her heart sickened, whenever they were talked of.

They did not leave the Abbey till after tea, and the idea that she might soon behold her brother the acknowledged heir of that Abbey, cast again a gleam of pleasure on the sad heart of Amanda, a gleam I say, for it faded before the almost instantaneous recollection, that ere that period Lord Mortimer and Lady Euphrasia would be united. Their lodgings were at the entrance of the town, and Mrs. Bruce had taken care that they should find every requisite refreshment within them.

Amanda having formed a plan relative to the will, determined not to delay executing it. She had often mentioned to Mrs. Duncan her uneasiness concerning her brother, as an excuse for the melancholy that lady, in a half serious, half jesting manner, so often rallied her about, and she now intended assigning her journey to London (which she was resolved should immediately take place) to her anxious wish of discovering, or at least, enquiring about him: the next morning she accordingly mentioned her intention,—Mrs. Duncan was not only surprised, but concerned, and endeavoured to dissuade her from it, by representing, in the most forcible manner, the dangers she might experience in so long a journey without a protector.

Amanda proposed travelling in a chaise to the borders of England, and then pursuing the remainder of her journey in a stage-coach. The woman of the house was sent for, and requested to engage a carriage for her against the next morning: the intervening time was almost entirely spent by Mrs. Duncan in lamenting the approaching loss of Amanda's society and the entreaties for her to return as soon as possible. Till this period she did not know, nor did Amanda conceive, the strength of their friendship. She presented her purse to our heroine, and in the impassioned language of sincerity, entreated her to consider it as the purse of a sister, and take from it whatever was necessary for her journey and uncertain stay.

Amanda, who never wished to lie under any obligations when she could possibly avoid them, declined the offer: but with the warmest expressions of gratitude and sensibility, declaring (what she thought would be the case,) that she had more than sufficient for all purposes: and all therefore she would accept was what Mrs. Duncan owed her.

Mrs. Duncan begged her to take a letter from her to her family, near whose house her first day's journey would terminate; "she was convinced," she said, "they would not suffer Amanda to sleep at an inn, but would probably keep her at their house a few days, and then escort her part of the way."

Averse to the society of strangers in her present frame of mind, Amanda said she would certainly take the letter, but could not possibly present it herself. She thanked Mrs. Duncan for her solicitous care about her; but added, whether she lodged at an inn or a private house for one night, was of little consequence: and as to her journey being retarded, it was what she never could allow.

Mrs. Duncan declared she was too fond of solitude, but did not argue the point with her, she wrote the letter however.

At an early hour Amanda entered the chaise. Ah! how did she tremble at the idea of her long and lonesome journey, and the difficulties she might encounter on its termination. Fears before unthought of, rose in her mind, from which her timid nature shrunk appalled; should Rushbrook be absent from London, or should he not answer her expectations; but "I deserve disappointment," cried she, "if I thus anticipate it."

On arriving in London she designed going to the haberdasher's, where, it may be remembered, she had once met Miss Rushbrook; here she hoped to procure lodgings; also a direction to Rushbrook. It was about five, when she stopped for the night, as the shortened days of autumn would not allow a longer journey. They stopped at the inn which Mrs. Duncan had taken care to know would be the last stage of the first day's journey; a small, but neat and comfortable house, romantically situated at the foot of a steep hill, crowned with the straggling remains of what appeared to have been the ruins of a religious house. On entering the inn, Amanda enquired about the Macqueen family, to whom Mrs. Duncan's letter was directed, and begged the landlady to send it directly. Her little dinner was soon served up; but when over, and she was left to herself, all the painful ideas she had sedulously, and with some degree of success, attempted to banish from her mind in the morning, by attending to the objects she passed, now returned with full, or rather aggravated force. A ramble, though the evening was uninviting, she preferred to the passive indulgence of her sorrow: and she was conducted to the garden of the inn, from whence she ascended the hill by a winding path. Forgetting the purpose for which she had walked out, she leaned in a melancholy reverie against a fragment of the ruined building, nor heard approaching footsteps, till the voice of her host suddenly broke upon her ear. She started, and per-

ceived him accompanied by two ladies, who he directly informed her, were Mrs. and Miss Macqueen. They both went up to Amanda, and after the usual compliments of introduction were over, Mrs. Macqueen took her hand, and with a smile of cordial good nature, invited her to her house for the night. Miss Macqueen seconded her mother, and said, "the moment they had read the letter they came out for the purpose of bringing her back with them."

Conscious from her utter dejection, that she would be unable to participate in the pleasures of conversation, Amanda declined the invitation, alleging as an excuse for doing so, her intention of proceeding on her journey the next morning by dawn of day.

Mrs. Macqueen declared that she should act as she pleased in that respect, and both she and her daughter renewed their entreaties for her company with such earnestness, that Amanda could no longer refuse them. She then attended the ladies to their mansion, which might well be termed the seat of hospitality. Mrs. Macqueen informed Amanda, during their walk, that all her family were now assembled together, as her sons, who were already engaged in different professions and businesses in various parts of the kingdom, made it a constant rule to pay a visit every autumn to their friends. It was quite dark ere the ladies reached the house. In the drawing-room were assembled Mr. Macqueen, two of his daughters, and half a dozen ladies and gentlemen, to whom Amanda was presented, and they in their turn to her. In the countenance of Mr. Macqueen, Amanda perceived a benevolence equal to that which irradiated his wife's. Both were past the prime of life: but in him only was its decline visible. He was lately grown so infirm as to be unable to remove without assistance: yet was his relish for society undiminished; and in his arm-chair, his legs muffled up in flannel, he promoted as much as ever the mirth of the family; "So the boys and girls are

not yet returned," said Mrs. Macqueen, addressing one of her daughters, "I am afraid they have taken their friends too far." She had scarcely spoken, when a party was heard under the windows talking and laughing, who ascended the stairs immediately in a kind of gay tumult, and a lady entered (of a most prepossessing appearance, though advanced in life,) and was followed by a number of young people.

But, oh! what were the emotions of Amanda's soul, when amongst them she beheld Lady Araminta Dormer, and Lord Mortimer!

CHAPTER XLV.

It would raise your pity, but to see the tears
Force thro' her snowy lids their melting course,
To lodge themselves on her red murmuring lips,
That talk such mournful things; when straight a gale
Of starting sighs carry those pearls away,
As dews by winds are wafted from the flow'rs. *Lee.*

THE party that entered, engaged in talking to those they found in the drawing room, were some time ere they observed Amanda: but soon, ah! how much too soon, did she perceive Mrs. Macqueen approaching to introduce those of her family who were just returned. She endeavoured to collect herself, and rose to meet the Macqueens: she was unable, however, to return their compliments, except by a faint smile; and was again sinking upon her seat, for her frame trembled universally, when Mrs. Macqueen, taking her hand, led her forward, and presented her to Lady Martha, and Lady Araminta Dormer. It may be remembered that Lady Martha had never before seen Amanda: she therefore gave her, as Miss Donald, a benignant smile, which, had she supposed her Miss Fitzalan, would have been lost in a contemptuous frown. How different was the look she received from Lady Araminta! in her expressive countenance she read surprise, contempt, and anger; and Amanda

heard her repeat, as if involuntarily, the name of "Donald."—Ah! how dreadful was the sound to her ear!—Ah! how sad a confirmation did it convey that every suspicion to her prejudice would now be strengthened!

Amanda withdrew her hand from Mrs. Macqueen, and moved trembling to her seat, when that lady stopped her.—"Miss Donald—Lord Mortimer," said she. Amanda raised her head, but not her eyes, and neither saw nor heard his lordship. The haughty glance of Lady Araminta dwelt upon her mind, and when her agitation had a little subsided, she stole a look at her, and saw Mrs. Macqueen sitting between her and Lady Martha, and from the altered countenance of the latter, she instantly conjectured she had been informed by her niece of her real name.

From these glances she quickly withdrew her own, and one of the young Macqueens drawing a chair near hers, began a conversation with all the spirit and vivacity which distinguished his family: but he was soon interrupted by his father, who in a good humoured manner told his son he would no longer suffer him to engross Miss. Donald to himself, and desired him to lead her to a chair near his.

Young Macqueen immediately arose, and led Amanda to his father, by whom he seated her: and by whom on the other side sat Lady Martha Dormer. Mr. Macqueen began with various questions relative to Mrs. Duncan, to which Amanda, as she was prepared for them, answered with tolerable composure; suddenly he dropped the subject of his relation, and asked Amanda from what branch of the Donald family she was descended. A question so unexpected, shocked, dismayed, and overwhelmed her with confusion.—She made no reply till the question was repeated: when in a low and faltering voice, and her face covered with blushes, she said, she did not know.

"Well," cried he, "and so you do not know from which branch of the family you are descended? Per-

haps now you only forgot. and if I were to mention them one by one, your memory might be refreshed: but first, let me ask you your father's surname, and what country-woman he married, for the Donalds generally married amongst each other."

Oh! how forcibly was Amanda at this moment convinced (if indeed her pure soul wanted such conviction) of the pain, the shame of deception, let the motive be what it may which prompts it. Involuntarily were her eyes turned from Mr. Macqueen as he paused for a reply to his last question, and at the moment encountered those of Lord Mortimer, who sat directly opposite her, and with deep attention regarded her, as if anxious to hear how she would extricate herself from the embarrassment her assumed name had plunged her into.

Her confusion, her blushes, her too evident distress, were all imputed by Mrs. Macqueen to fatigue at listening to such tedious questions; she knew her husband's only foible was an eager desire to trace every one's pedigree; in order therefore to relieve Amanda from her present situation, she proposed a party at whist, at which Mr. Macqueen often amused himself, and whispered Amanda to go over to the tea-table.

Amanda required no repetition, and went to the table; Miss Macqueen made room for her by herself, and Amanda, anxious to do anything which could keep her from meeting the eyes she dreaded, requested to be employed in assisting her, and was deputed to fill out the coffee. After the first performance of her task, Miss Macqueen in a whispering voice, said to Amanda, "Do you know we are all here more than half in love with Lord Mortimer; he is certainly very handsome, and his manner is quite as pleasing as his looks, for he has none of that foppery and conceit which handsome men so generally have, and nothing but the knowledge of his engagement could keep us from pulling caps about

him ; but see," she continued, touching Amanda's hand, "the conquering hero comes."—Lord Mortimer with difficulty made his way round the table, and accepted a seat from Miss Macqueen, which she eagerly offered him, and which she contrived to procure by sitting closer to Amanda. To her next neighbour, a fine lively girl, Amanda now turned, and entered into conversation with her ; but from this she was soon called by Miss Macqueen requesting her to pour out a cup of coffee for Lord Mortimer.

Amanda obeyed, and he rose to receive it ; her hand trembled as she presented it. She looked not in his face, but she thought that his hand was not quite steady ; she saw him lay his cup on the table, and bend his eyes to the ground.

At length the business of the tea-table was declared over ; and almost at the same moment the sound of a violin was heard from an adjoining room. The music was a signal for universal motion ; all in a moment was bustle and confusion. The young men instantly selected their partners and seemed ready to dance from one room to another. The young Macqueen who had been so assiduous about Amanda, now came, and as if dancing was a thing of course, was leading her after the rest of the party, when she drew back, declaring she could not dance. Surprised and disappointed, he stood looking on her in silence. At last he spoke and requested she would not mortify him by a refusal.

Mrs. Macqueen hearing her son's request, came forward and joined it. Amanda pleaded, and not without truth, a head-ache. One of the Miss Macqueens now ran into the room, exclaiming, "Lord Colin, what are you about ! Lord Mortimer and my sister have already led off ; do pray make haste and join us," and away she ran.

"Let me no longer detain you," said Amanda, withdrawing her hand ; and young Macqueen finding her inflexible, went off to seek another partner.

“We will go into the dancing-room, if you please,” said Mrs. Macqueen to Amanda, “that will amuse without fatiguing you.” Amanda would rather not have gone, but she could not say no; and they proceeded to it. Lord Mortimer had just concluded the dance, and was standing near the door in a pensive attitude. Miss Macqueen being too much engrossed by something she was saying to the young lady next to her, to mind him. The moment he perceived Amanda enter, he again approached his partner, and began chatting in a lively manner to her.—Amanda and Mrs. Macqueen sat down together, and in listening to the conversation of that lady, Amanda found herself insensibly drawn from a too painful attention to surrounding objects.

At last they were summoned to supper. Mr. Macqueen was already seated at the table in his arm-chair, and Lady Martha Dormer on his right hand: the company was chequered, and Amanda found herself seated between Lord Mortimer and Mr. Colin Macqueen; and in conversation with the latter, Amanda sought to avoid noticing, or being noticed by Lord Mortimer; and his lordship, by the particular attention he paid Miss Macqueen, appeared actuated by the same wish. In the course of supper, Lord Mortimer was compelled to follow the example of the rest in drinking Amanda’s health: obliged to turn her looks to him, oh! how did her heart shrink at the glance, the expressive glance of his eye as he pronounced Miss Donald. The supper things removed, songs, toasts, and sentiments succeeded. Old Macqueen set the example by a favourite Scotch air, and then called upon his next neighbour. Between the songs, toasts were called for. At last it came to Lord Mortimer’s turn. Amanda suddenly ceased speaking to young Macqueen. She saw the glass of Lord Mortimer filled, and in the next moment heard the name of Lady Euphrasia Sutherland. A feeling like wounded pride, stole into the soul of Aman-

da; she did not decline her head as before, and felt a faint glow upon her cheek.

At length she was called upon for a song; she declined the call; but Mr. Macqueen declared, except assured she could not sing, she should not be excused. This assurance without a breach of truth, she could not give; she also wished from a sudden impulse of pride, to appear cheerful in those eyes she knew were attentively watching her, and therefore after a little hesitation, consented to sing. The first song which occurred to her, was a little simple but pathetic air, which her father used to delight in, and which Lord Mortimer more than once had heard from her: but indeed she could recollect no song which at some time or other she had not sung for him. She had proceeded through half the second verse, when her voice began to falter: the attention of the company became, if possible, more fixed; but it was a vain attention, no rich strains of melody repaid it, for the voice of the songstress had totally ceased. Amanda's eyes were bent to the ground. Suddenly a glass of water was presented to her by a trembling hand, by the hand of Mortimer himself. She declined it with a motion of hers, and reviving a little, raised her head. Young Macqueen then gave her an entreating whisper to finish her song: she thought it would look like affectation to require further solicitation, and faintly smiling, she again began in strains of liquid melody, strains that seemed to breathe the very spirit of sensibility.

The plaudits she received from her singing, gave to her cheeks such a faint tinge as is seen in the wild rose. She was now authorized to call for a song; and, as if doomed to experience cause for agitation, Lord Mortimer was the person from whom, in the rotation of the table, she was to claim it. Thrice she was requested to do this ere she obeyed. At last she raised her eyes to his face, which was now turned towards hers, and she saw in it a confusion

equal to that she herself trembled under. Pale and red by turns, he appeared to her to wait in painful agitation for the sound of her voice; her lips moved, but she could not articulate a word. Lord Mortimer bowed, as if he had heard what they would have said, and then turning abruptly to Miss Macqueen, began speaking to her.

"Come, come, my lord," said Mr. Macqueen, "we must not be put off in this manner."

Lord Mortimer laughed, and attempted to rally the old gentleman; but he seemed unequal to the task, for with a sudden seriousness, he declared his inability of complying with the present demand; all farther solicitation on the subject was immediately dropped. In the round of toasts they forgot not to call upon Amanda for one; if she had listened attentively when Lord Mortimer was about giving one, not less attentively did he now listen to her. She hesitated a moment, and then gave Sir Charles Bingley. After the toast had passed, "Sir Charles Bingley," repeated Miss Macqueen, leaning forward, and speaking across Lord Mortimer: "Oh! I recollect him very well; his regiment was quartered about two years ago, at a little fort some distance from this; and I remember his coming with a shooting party to the mountains; and sleeping one night here. Pray are you well acquainted with him?" "Yes—No," replied Amanda.

"Ah! I believe you are, shy girl," cried Miss Macqueen, laughing. "Pray, my lord, does not that blush declare Miss Donald guilty!" "We are not always to judge from the countenance," said he, darting a penetrating, yet quickly withdrawn glance at Amanda. "Experience," continued he, "daily proves how little dependence is to be placed on it." Amanda turned hastily away, and pretended to be speaking to young Macqueen, not to notice a speech she knew directly pointed at her, for often had Lord Mortimer declared, "that in the lineaments of the

human face divine, each passion of the soul might be traced."

The company broke up soon after this, and much earlier than usual, on account of the travellers : some maids of the house appeared to show the ladies to their respective chambers. Amanda dismissed the servant at the door, and throwing herself into a chair, availed herself of solitude to give vent to the tears, whose painful suppression had so long tortured her heart. She had not sat long in this situation, when she heard a gentle tap at the door. She started, and believed it to be one of the Miss Macqueens, hastily wiped away her tears, and opened the door. A female stranger appeared at it, who courtesying respectfully, said, "Lady Martha Dormer, her lady, desired to see Miss Donald for a few minutes, if not inconvenient to her." "See me," repeated Amanda, with the utmost surprise, "can it be possible?" She suddenly checked herself, and said, "she would attend her ladyship immediately." She accordingly followed the maid, a variety of strange ideas crowded upon her mind. Her conductress shut the door as she retired from the room into which she showed Amanda ; it was a small anti-chamber adjoining the chamber Lady Martha was to lie in. Here, with increasing surprise, she beheld Lord Mortimer, pacing the room in an agitated manner. His back was to the door as she entered, but he turned round with quickness, approached, looked on her a few moments, then striking his hand against his forehead, turned from her with an air of distraction.

All was silent for a few minutes. Lady Martha then spoke in a grave voice :—"I should not, Madam, have taken the liberty of sending for you at this hour, but that I believe so favourable an opportunity would not again have occurred of speaking to you on a subject particularly interesting to me, an opportunity which has so unexpectedly saved me the trouble of trying to find you out, and the necessity of writing to you."

Lady Martha paused: and her silence was not interrupted by Amanda. "Last summer," continued Lady Martha,—“last summer there were some little gifts presented to you by Lord Mortimer: from the events which followed their acceptance, I must presume they are valueless to you: from the events about taking place, they are of importance elsewhere:” she ceased, but Amanda could make no reply.

“You cannot be ignorant,” said Lady Martha, with somewhat of severity in her accent, as if offended by the silence of Amanda, “you cannot be ignorant, I suppose, that it is the picture and ring I allude to; the latter from being a family one of particular value, I always destined for the wife of Lord Mortimer, I therefore claim it in my own name. The picture I have his lordship’s approbation and authority to demand, and to convince you I have, indeed, if such a conviction be necessary, have prevailed on him to be present at this conversation. If not convenient to restore them immediately, I will give you a direction where they may be left in London, to which place Mrs. Macqueen has informed me you are going.”—“It is perfectly convenient now to restore them, madam,” replied Amanda, animated with conscious innocence and offended pride, which always gave her strength. “I shall return,” continued she, moving to the door, “with them immediately to your ladyship.”

The picture was suspended from her neck, and the ring in its case lay in her pocket: but by the manner in which they had been asked, or rather demanded from her, she felt, amidst the anguish of her soul, a sudden emotion of pleasure that she could directly give them back: yet when in her own room she hastily untied the picture from her neck, pulled the black ribbon from it, and laid it in its case, her grief overcame every other feeling, and a shower of tears fell from her.—“Oh, Mortimer! dear Mortimer!” she sighed. “must I even part with this little shadow?”

Must I retain no vestige of happier hours? Yet why, why should I wish to retain it, when the original will soon be another's? Yes, if I behold Lord Mortimer again, it will be as the husband of Lady Euphrasia."

She recollected she was staying beyond the expected time, and wiped away her tears: yet still she lingered a few minutes in the chamber, to try to calm her agitation. She called her pride to her aid, it inspired her with fortitude, and she proceeded to Lady Martha, determined that that lady should see nothing in her manner which she could possibly construe into weakness or meanness.

"Here madam, is the ring," cried she, presenting it to Lady Martha, "and here is the picture," she would have added, but her voice faltered, and a tear started from her eye; determined to conceal, if possible, her feelings, she dashed away the pearly fugitive. Lady Martha was again extending her hand when Lord Mortimer suddenly started from the couch on which he had thrown himself, and snatched the picture from the trembling hand that held it, pulled it from its case, and flinging it on the floor, trampled it beneath his feet: "Thus perish," exclaimed he, "every memento of my attachment to Amanda! Oh, wretched, wretched girl! you have undone yourself and me!" He turned abruptly away, and instantly left the room. Shocked by his words, and terrified by his manner, Amanda had just power to gain a chair. Lady Martha seemed also thunder struck, but the deep convulsive, suffocating sobs of Amanda soon recalled her. She went to her, and finding her unable to help herself, loosened her cravat, bathed her temples with lavender, and gave her water to drink. These attentions, and the tears she shed, revived Amanda. She raised herself in her chair, on which she had fallen back, but was yet too agitated to stand.

"Poor unhappy creature!" said Lady Martha, "I pity you from my soul. Ah! if your mind re-

sembled your person, what a perfect creature had you been! How happy then had been my poor Mortimer!"

Now, now was the test, the shining test of Amanda's virtue, agonized by knowing she had lost the good opinion of those whom she loved with such ardour, esteemed with such reverence. She knew by a few words she could explain the appearances which had deprived her of his good opinion, and fully regain it, regain, by a few words, the love, the esteem of her valued, her inestimable Mortimer; the affection, the protection of his amiable aunt and sister. She leaned her head upon her hand, the weight on her bosom became less oppressive, she raised her head:—"Of my innocence I can give such proofs," cried she.—Her lips closed, a mortal paleness overspread her face: the solemn, the dreadful declaration Lord Cherbury had made of not surviving the discovery of his secret rushed upon her mind: she beheld herself on the very verge of a tremendous precipice, and about plunging herself and a fellow creature into it, from whence at the tribunal of God she would have to answer for accelerating the death of a fellow creature. "And is it by a breach of faith," she asked herself, "I hope to be re-established in the opinion of Lord Mortimer and his relations? Oh! what were that, or what the esteem, the plaudits of the world, if those of my own heart were gone for ever?"

Lady Martha had been a silent spectator of Amanda's emotions, and thinking as she did of her, could only hope they proceeded from contrition for her past conduct, forcibly awakened by reflecting on the deprivations it had caused her.

When she again saw Amanda able to pay attention, she addressed her. "I said I was sorry for witnessing your distress, I shall not repeat the expression, thinking as I now do, that it is occasioned by regret for past errors; the tears of repentance wash away the stains of guilt, and that heart must indeed be

callous which the sigh of remorse will not melt to pity." Amanda turned her eyes with earnestness on Lady Martha as she spoke, and her cheeks were again tinged with a faint glow. "It gave me pleasure," continued Lady Martha, "to hear you had been in employment at Mrs. Duncan's, but that pleasure was destroyed by hearing you were going to London, though to seek your brother, Mrs. Duncan has informed Mrs. Macqueen. If this were indeed the motive, there are means of enquiring without taking so imprudent a step." "Imprudent!" repeated Amanda, involuntarily. "Yes," cried Lady Martha, "a journey so long, without a protector, to a young, I must add a lovely woman, teems with danger from which a mind of delicacy would shrink appalled. You will, if indeed anxious to escape from any further censure than what has already fallen upon you, return to Mrs. Duncan, when I inform you (if indeed you are ignorant of it) that Colonel Belgrave passed this road about a month ago, in his way from a remote part of Scotland, to London, where he now is." "I cannot help," said Amanda, "the misconstructions which may be put on my actions; I can only support myself under the pain they inflict by conscious rectitude."

"If," said Lady Martha, "your journey is not really prompted by the intention of seeing your brother, you heighten every other by duplicity." "You are severe, madam," exclaimed Amanda, in whose soul the pride of injured innocence was again reviving.

"If I probe the wound," cried Lady Martha, "I would also wish to heal it: it is the wish I feel of saving a young creature from further error, of serving a being once so highly valued by him who possesses my first regard, that makes me speak as I now do. Return to Mrs. Duncan's, prove in one instance, at least, you do not deserve suspicion; she is your friend, and in your situation, a friend is too precious

a treasure to run the risk of loosing it with her : as she lives retired there will be little danger of your history or real name being discovered, which I am sorry you dropped, let your motive for doing so be what it may, for the detection of one deception makes us suspect every other. Return, I repeat, to Mrs. Duncan's, and if you want any enquiries made about your brother, dictate them, and I will take care they shall be made, and that you shall know their result."

Amanda told lady Martha, " that she thanked her for her kind offer, but must decline it, as the line of conduct she had marked out for herself rendered it unnecessary ; whose innocence would yet be justified," she added. Lady Martha shook her head : the consciousness of having excited suspicions which she could not justify, had indeed given to the looks of Amanda a confusion when she spoke, which confirmed them in Lady Martha's breast.—" I am sorry for your determination," said she, " but notwithstanding it is so contrary to my ideas of what is right, I cannot let you depart without telling you, that should you at any time want or require services, which you would, or could not ask from strangers, or perhaps expect them to perform, acquaint me, and command mine : yet, in doing justice to my own feelings, I must not do injustice to the noble ones of Lord Mortimer ; it is by his desire, as well as my own inclinations, I now speak to you in this manner, though past events, and the situation he is about entering into, must for ever preclude his personal interference in your affairs ; he could never hear the daughter of Captain Fitzalan suffered inconvenience of any kind, without wishing, without having her, indeed, if possible, extricated from it." " Oh ! madam," exclaimed Amanda, unable longer to restrain her gushing tears, " I am already well acquainted with the noble feelings of Lord Mortimer, already oppressed with a weight of obligations." Lady Martha was

affected by her energy, and her eyes grew humid. Amanda moved towards the door, and had laid her hand upon the lock, when Lady Martha suddenly said, "there were letters passed between you and Lord Mortimer." Amanda bowed.—"They had better be mutually returned," said Lady Martha.—"Do you seal up his, and send them to Lord Cherbury's house in London, directed to me, and I will pledge myself to have yours returned." "You shall be obeyed, madam," replied Amanda, in a low broken voice, after a pause of a moment. Lady Martha then said she would no longer encroach on her rest, and she then retired.

In her chamber the feelings she had so long, so painfully tried to suppress, broke forth without again meeting with opposition; the pride which had given her a transient animation, was no more, for as past circumstances arose to her recollection, she could not wonder for being condemned from them. Rest, after the incidents of the evening, was not to be thought of, but nature was exhausted, and insensibly Amanda sunk upon the bed in a deep sleep, so insensibly, that when she awoke, which was not till the morning was pretty far advanced, she felt surprised at her situation: she felt cold and unrefreshed from having lain in her clothes all night, and when she went to adjust her dress at the glass, was surprised with the pallidness of her looks. Anxious to escape a second painful meeting, she went to the window to see if the chaise was come, but was disappointed on finding that she had slept at the back of the house; she heard no noise, and concluding the family had not yet risen after the amusements of the preceding night, sat down by the window which looked into a spacious garden. Her patience was exhausted, after sitting some time, and going to the door, she softly opened it, to try if she could hear any one stirring. She had not stood long, when the sound of footsteps and voices rose from below. She

instantly quitted her room, and descended the stairs into the hall; here at a long table, were all the men servants belonging to the family, and the guests, assembled at breakfast. Amanda stepped back the moment she perceived them, well knowing Lord Mortimer's servants would recollect her, and was ascending the stairs to her room to ring for one of the maids, when a servant instantly followed her, and said the family were already in the breakfast-room; at the same moment, Mr. Colin Macqueen came into the hall, and after paying Amanda the compliments of the morning, he led her to the parlour, where not only all the family guests who had laid in the house, but several gentlemen, who had been with them the preceeding night, were assembled. Doctor Johnson has already celebrated a Scotch breakfast, nor was the one at which Mrs. Macqueen and her fair daughters presided, inferior to any he had seen.

Amanda was seated between Mr. Colin Macqueen and his eldest sister, and sought, by conversation with the former, for the latter was too much engrossed by the general gaiety to pay much attention to any one, to avoid the looks she dreaded to see: yet the sound of Lord Mortimer's voice affected her as much almost as his looks.

"Pray, Lady Martha," said the second Miss Macqueen, a lively thoughtless girl, "will your ladyship be so good as to guarantee a promise Lord Mortimer has just made me, or rather which I have extorted from him, which is the cause of this application?" "You must first, my dear," answered Lady Martha, "let me know what the promise is." "Why gloves, and bridal favours, but most unwillingly granted, I can assure your ladyship." Amanda was obliged to set down the cup she was raising to her lips, and a glance stole involuntarily from her towards Lord Mortimer, a glance instantly withdrawn when she saw his eyes in the same direction.

Breakfast over, Amanda was anxious to depart,

and yet wanted courage to be the first to move: a charm seemed to bind her to the spot where for the last time she should behold Lord Mortimer, at least the last time she ever expected to see him unmarried.

Her dread of being late on the road, at last, so conquered her reluctance to move, that she said to Mr. Colin Macqueen, it was time for her to go. At this moment Lord Mortimer rose, and proposed to the young Macqueens going with them to see the new plantations behind the house, which old Macqueen had expressed a desire his lordship should give his opinion on.

All the gentlemen, Colin Macqueen excepted, attended his lordship, nor did they depart without wishing Amanda a pleasant journey.

Silent and sad, she continued in her chair for some minutes after they had quitted the room, forgetful of her situation, till the loud laugh of the Miss Macqueens restored her to a recollection of it. She blushed, and rising hastily, was proceeding to pay her farewell compliments, when Mrs. Macqueen, rising, drew her to the window, and in a low voice repeated her request for Amanda's company for a few days. This Amanda again declined, but gratefully expressed her thanks for it, and the hospitality she had experienced: and having received the affectionate adieu of this amiable woman and her daughters, courtesied, though with down-cast looks, to Lady Martha and Lady Araminta, who returned her salutation with coolness.

Followed by two of the Miss Macqueens, she hurried through the hall, from which the servants and breakfast things were already removed; but how was she distressed, when the first object she saw outside the door was Lord Mortimer, by whom stood Colin Macqueen, who had left the parlour to see if the chaise was ready, and one of his brothers; hastily would she have stepped forward to the chaise, had

not the gallantry of the young men impeded her way. They expressed sorrow at her not staying longer among them, and hopes on her return she would.

"Pray, my lord," cried Miss Macqueen (while her brothers were addressing Amanda,) "pray, my lord, what have you done with the gentlemen?" "You should ask your brother that," he replied, "he has locked them up in the plantation." A frolic was at all times pleasing to the light hearted Macqueens, and, to enjoy the present one, off they ran directly, followed by their brothers. Amanda, from the awkward and agitated situation in which they left her, would instantly have relieved herself, could she have made the postilion hear her; but as if enjoying the race, he had gone to some distance to view it; a heavy sigh pierced her ears. "Amanda." in the next moment, said a voice to which her heart vibrated. She turned with involuntary quickness, and saw Lord Mortimer close by her. "Amanda," he repeated, then suddenly clasping his hands together, exclaimed, with an agonized expression, while he turned abruptly from her; "Gracious heaven! what a situation!"—"Amanda," said he again looking at her, "the scene which happened last night was distressing. I am now sorry, on your account, that it took place, notwithstanding past events, I bear you no ill will: the knowledge of your uneasiness would give me pain; from my heart I forgive you all that you have caused, that you have entailed on me: at this moment I could take you in my arms, and weep over you, like the fond mother over the last darling of her hopes, tears of pity and forgiveness."

Amanda! unutterably affected, covered her face to hide the tears which bedewed it.

"Let me have the pleasure of hearing," continued Lord Mortimer, "that you forgive the uneasiness and pain I might have occasioned you last night." "Forgive!" repeated Amanda, "Oh! my lord," and

her voice sank in the sobs which heaved her bosom.—“Could I think you were, you would be happy.”—Lord Mortimer stopped, overcome by strong emotions. “Happy!” repeated Amanda, “oh! never—never,” continued she, raising her streaming eyes to heaven, “oh! never—never in this world.”

At this moment the Macqueens were not only heard, but seen running back; followed by the gentlemen whom they had been prevailed on to liberate. Shocked at the idea of being seen in such a situation, Amanda would have called the postilion, but he was too far off to hear her weak voice, had she then even been able to exert that voice.—She looked towards him, however, with an expression which denoted the feeling of her soul.—Lord Mortimer, sensible of those feelings, hastily pulled open the door of the chaise, and taking the cold and trembling hand of Amanda, with one equally cold and trembling, assisted her into it, then pressing the hand he held between both his, he suddenly let it drop from him, and closing the door without again looking at Amanda, called to the driver, who immediately obeyed the call, and had mounted ere the Macqueens arrived, and gave the man a signal to drive off, which was instantly obeyed.

Amanda pursued the remainder of her journey without meeting anything worthy of relation. It was in the evening she reached London. The moment she stopped at the hotel, she sent for a carriage and proceeded in it to Mrs. Connel’s in Bond Street.

CHAPTER XLVI.

Dissembling hope, her cloudy front she clears
And a false vigour in her eyes appear. *Dryden.*

SHE alighted from the carriage when it stopped at the door, and entered the shop, where, to her inexpressible satisfaction, the first object she beheld was

Miss Rushbrook sitting pensively at one of the counters. The moment she saw Amanda, she recollected her, and starting up, exclaimed, as she took her hand, "Ah! dear madam, this is indeed a joyful surprise! Ah! how often have I wished to meet you again to express my gratitude." The affectionate reception she met, and the unexpected sight of Miss Rushbrook, seemed to promise Amanda that her wishes relative to Rushbrook would not only be accelerated, but crowned with success. She returned the fervent pressure of Miss Rushbrook's hand, and inquired after her parents; the inquiry appeared distressing, and she answered, with hesitation that they were indifferent: the evident embarrassment her question excited prevented her renewing it at this time. The mistress of the house was not present, and Amanda requested, if she was within, she might see her directly. Miss Rushbrook immediately stepped to a parlour behind the shop, and almost instantly returned, followed by the lady herself, who was a little fat Irish woman, past her prime, but not past her relish for the good things of this life; "Dear madam," said she, courtseying to Amanda, "you are very welcome; I protest I am very glad to see you, though I never had that pleasure but once before; but it is no wonder I should be so, for I have heard your praises every day since, I am sure, from that young lady," looking at Miss Rushbrook. Amanda bowed, but her heart was too full of the purpose of this visit to allow her to speak about any thing else. She was just come from the country, she told Mrs. Connel, where (she sighed as she spoke) she had left her friends, and, being unwilling to go amongst total strangers, she had come to her house in hopes of being able to procure lodgings in it.

"Dear ma'am," said Mrs. Connel, "I protest I should have been happy to have accommodated you, but at present my house is quite full."

The disappointment this speech gave Amanda ren-

dered her silent for a moment, and she was then going to ask Mrs. Connel if she could recommend her to a lodging, when she perceived Miss Rushbrook whispering her. "Why, Madam," cried the former, who by a nod of her head seemed to approve of what the latter had been saying, "since you dislike so much going among strangers, which indeed shews your prudence, considering what queer kind of people are in the world, Miss Emily says, that if you condescend to accept of part of her little bed, till you can settle yourself more comfortably in town, you shall be extremely welcome to it; and I can assure you, Madam, I shall do every thing in my power to render my house agreeable to you." "Oh most joyfully, most thankfully, do I accept the offer, said Amanda, whose heart had sunk at the idea of going amongst strangers.—"Any place," she continued, speaking in the fulness of that agitated heart, "beneath so reputable a roof, would be an asylum of comfort I should prefer to a palace, if utterly unacquainted with the people who inhabited it; her trunk was now brought in, and the carriage discharged. "I suppose Ma'am," said Mrs. Connel, looking at the trunk on which her assumed name was marked, "you are Scotch by your name, though indeed you have not much of the accent about you." "I declare," cried Emily, also looking at it, "till this moment I was ignorant of your name."

Amanda was pleased to hear this, and resolved not to disclose her real one, except convinced Rushbrook would interest himself in her affairs.—She was conducted into the parlour, which was neatly furnished, and opened into the shop by a glass door. Mrs. Connel stirred a declining fire into a cheerful blaze, and desired to know if Amanda would choose any thing for dinner. "Speak the word only, my dear," said she, "and I think I can procure you a cold bone in the house. If you had come two hours sooner, I could have given you a bit of nice veal for your dinner."—Amanda assured her she did not wish to take any thing till tea time.

“Well, well,” cried Mrs. Connel, “you shall have a snug cup of tea by and by, and a hot muffin with it. I am very fond of tea myself, though poor Mr. Connel, who is dead and gone, used often and often to say, I that was so nervous should never touch tea; ‘but, Biddy,’ he would say, and he would laugh so, poor dear man, ‘you and all your sex are like your mother Eve, unable to resist temptation.’”

Emily retired soon after Amanda entered; but returned in a few minutes with her hat and cloak on, and said, nothing but a visit she must pay her parents should have induced her to forego, for the first evening at least, the pleasure of Miss Donald’s society.

Amanda thanked her for her politeness, but assured her, if considered as a restraint, she should be unhappy.

“I assure you,” said Mrs. Connel, as Emily departed, “she is very fond of you.” “I am happy to hear it,” replied Amanda, “for I think her a most amiable girl.” “Indeed she is,” cried the other, “all the fault I find with her is being too grave for her time of life. Poor thing, one cannot wonder at that, however, considering the situation of her parents.” “I hope,” interrupted Amanda, “it is not so bad as it was.” “Bad! Lord it cannot be worse; the poor Captain has been in goal above a year.” “I am sorry,” said Amanda, “to hear this; has any application been made to Lady Greystock since his confinement?” “To Lady Greystock! why, Lord, one might as well apply to one of the wild beasts in the tower. Ah! poor gentleman if he was never to get nothing but what she gave him, I believe he would not long be a trouble to any one. It is now about fourteen years since my acquaintance with him first commenced. My poor husband, that is no more, and I kept a shop in Dublin, where the Captain’s regiment was quartered, and he being only a lieutenant had not room enough for his family in the barracks, so he took lodgings at our house where Mrs.

Rushbrook lay in, and I being with her now and then during her confinement, a kind of friendship grew amongst us. They had not left us long to go to America, when a relation of my husband's, who owned this house and shop, having lost his wife, and being lonesome, without either chick or child, invited us to come and live with him, promising us if we did, to settle us in his business, and leave us every thing he had.—Well, such offers do not come every day, so to be sure we took him at his word; and here we had not long been when the poor man bid adieu to all mortal care, and was soon followed by Mr. Connel. Well, to be sure, I was sad and solitary enough; but when I thought how irreligious it was to break one's heart with grief, I plucked up my spirits and began to hold up my head again; so, to make a short story of a long one, about six years ago Mrs. Rushbrook and Miss Emily came one day into the shop to buy something, little thinking they should see an old friend; it was to be sure a meeting of joy and sorrow, as one may say; we told all our griefs to each other, and I found things were very bad with the poor Captain; indeed I have a great regard for him and his family, and when he was confined, I took Emily home as an assistant in my business; the money she earned was to go to her parents, and I agreed to give her her clothes gratis; but that would have gone but a little way in feeding so many mouths had I not procured plain-work for Mrs. Rushbrook and her daughters. Emily is a very good girl indeed, and it is to see her parents she is now gone; but while I am gabbling away I am sure the kettle is boiling." So saying, she started up, and ringing the bell, took the tea-things from a beaufet where they were kept; the maid having obeyed the well known summons, then retired; and as soon as the tea was made, and the muffins buttered, Mrs. Connel made Amanda draw her chair close to the table, that she might, as she said, look snug, and drink her tea comfortably.

“ I assure, you Ma’am,” cried she, “ it was a lucky hour for Miss Emily when she entered my house.” “ I have no doubt of that,” said Amanda. “ You must know, Madam,” proceeded Mrs. Connel, “ about a month ago a gentleman came to lodge with me, who I soon found was making speeches to Miss Emily ; he was one of those wild looking sparks, who, like Ranger in the play, look as if they would be popping through every one’s doors and windows, and playing such tricks as made poor Strickland so jealous of his wife.—Well, I took my gentleman to task one day unawares : so Mr. Siphthorpe, says I, I am told you have cast a sheep’s-eye upon one of my girls ; but I must tell you she is a girl of virtue and family, so if you do not mean to deal honourably with her, you must either decamp from this, or speak to her no more. Upon this he made me a speech as long as a member of parliament’s upon a new tax. Lord ! Mr. Siphthrope, said I, there is no occasion for all this oratory, a few words will settle the business between us. Well, this was coming close to the point you will say, and he told me then he always meant to deal honourably by Miss Emily, and told me all about his circumstances ; and I found he had a fine fortune, which indeed I partly guessed before from the appearance he made, and he said he would not only marry Miss Emily, but take her parents out of prison, and provide for the whole family. Well, now comes the provoking part of my story : a young clergyman had been kind at the beginning of their distress to them, and he and Miss Emily took it into their heads to fall in love with each other.—Well, her parents gave their consent to their being married, which to be sure I thought a very foolish thing knowing the young man’s inability to serve them. To be sure he promised fair enough ; but, Lord ! what could a poor curate do for them ; particularly when he got a wife and a house full of children of his own ? I thought so I supposed they would be quite glad to be off with

him, and to give her to Mr. Siphthorpe ; but no such thing I assure you. When I mentioned it to them, one talked of honour, and another of gratitude, and as to Miss Emily she fairly went into fits. Well, I thought I would serve them in spite of themselves ; so knowing the curate to be a romantic young fellow I writes off to him, and tells him what a cruel thing it would be, if, for his own gratification, he kept Miss Emily to her word, and made her lose a match which would free her family from all their difficulties ; and in short I touched upon his passion not a little I assure you, and, as I hoped, a letter came from him, in which he told her he gave her up. Well, to be sure there was sad work when it came—with her I mean, for the Captain and his wife were glad enough of it I believe in their hearts ; so at last every thing was settled for her marriage with Siphthorpe, and he made a number of handsome presents to her, I assure you, and they are to be married in a few days ; he is only waiting for his rents in the country to take the Captain out of prison ; but here is Miss Emily, instead of being quite merry and joyful, is as dull and as melancholy as if she was going to be married to a frightful old man.” “ Consider,” said Amanda, “ you have just said her heart was pre-engaged.” “ Lord ?” cried Mrs. Connel, “ a girl at her time of life can change her love as easily as her cap.” “ I sincerely hope,” exclaimed Amanda, “ that she either has, or may soon be able to transfer hers.” “ And now, pray, madam,” said Mrs. Connel, with a look which seemed to say Amanda should be as communicative as she had been, “ may I ask from whence you have travelled ?” “ From a remote part of Scotland.” “ Dear, what a long journey !—Lord ! they say that is a very desolate place, madam, without never a tree or a bush in it.” “ I assure you it wants neither shade nor verdure,” replied Amanda.—“ Really, well, lord, what lies some people tell ! Pray, ma’am, may I ask what countrywoman you are ?” “ Welch,”

said Amanda.—“Really; well, I suppose, ma’am, you have had many a scramble up the mountains after the goats, which they say are marvellous plenty in that part of the world.” “No, indeed,” replied Amanda.—“Are you come to make any long stay in London, ma’am?” “I have not determined.”—“I suppose you have come about a little business ma’am?” resumed Mrs. Connel.—“Yes,” replied Amanda—“To be sure not an affair of great consequence, or so young a lady would not have undertaken it.” Amanda smiled, but made no reply, and was at length relieved from these tiresome and inquisitive questions by Mrs. Connel’s calling in her girls to tea; after which she washed the tea things, put them into the beaufet, and left the room to order something comfortable for supper. Left to herself, Amanda reflected that at the present juncture of Rushbrook’s affairs, when his attention and time were engrossed by the approaching settlement of his daughter, an application to him, on her own account, would be not only impertinent but unavailing; she therefore determined to wait till the hurry and agitation produced by such an event had subsided, and most sincerely did she hope that it might be productive of felicity to all. Mrs. Connel was not long absent, and Emily returned almost at the moment she re-entered the room. “Well, Miss,” said Mrs. Connel, addressing her ere she had time to speak to Amanda, “I have been telling your good friend here all about your affairs.”

“Have you, ma’am?” cried Emily, with a faint smile, and a dejected voice—Amanda looked earnestly in her face, and saw an expression of the deepest sadness in it. From her own heart she readily imagined what her feelings must be at such a disappointment as Mrs. Connel had mentioned, and felt the sincerest pity for her. Mrs. Connel’s volubility tormented them both; supper happily terminated it, as she was then much better employed in her own

opinion, than she could possibly have been in talking; Amanda pleaded fatigue for retiring early. Mrs. Connel advised her to try a few glasses of wine as a restorative; but she begged to be excused, and was allowed to retire with Emily. The chamber was small, but neat, and enlivened by a good fire, to which Amanda and Emily sat down while undressing.—The latter eagerly availed herself of this opportunity to express the gratitude of her heart.—Amanda tried to change the discourse but could not succeed, “Long, madam,” continued Emily, “have we wished to return our thanks for a benefaction so delicately conveyed as yours, and happy were my parents to-night, when I informed them I could now express their grateful feelings.” “Though interested exceedingly in your affairs,” said Amanda, making another effort to change the discourse, “be assured I never should have taken the liberty of inquiring minutely into them, and I mention this, lest you might suppose from what Mrs. Connel said, that I had done so.” “No, madam,” replied Emily, “I had no such an idea, and an inquiry from you would be rather pleasing than otherwise, because I should then flatter myself you might be induced to listen to griefs which have long wanted the consolation of sympathy—such I am sure as they would receive from you.”—“Happy should I be,” cried Amanda, “had I the power of alleviating them.” “Oh! madam, you have the power,” said Emily, “for you would commiserate them, and commiseration from you would be balm to my heart; you would strengthen me in my duties—you would instruct me in resignation; but I am selfish in desiring to intrude them on you.” “No,” replied Amanda, taking her hand, “you flatter me by such a desire.” “Then, madam, while you are undressing I will give myself the melancholy indulgence of relating my little story.”

CHAPTER XLVII.

“Take heed, take heed, thou lovely maid,
Nor be by glitt’ring ills betray’d.”

“To open our heart to those we know will commiserate our sorrows, is the sweetest consolation those sorrows can receive; to you then, madam, I divulge mine, sure at least of pity.—At the time I first had the happiness of seeing you, the little credit my father had, was exhausted, and his inability to pay being well known, he was arrested one evening as he sat by the bed-side of my almost expiring mother! I will not pain your gentle nature by dwelling on the horrors of that moment, on the agonies of a parent, and a husband torn from a family so situated as was my father’s; feeble, emaciated, without even sufficient clothing to guard him from the inclemency of the weather, he leaned upon the arm of one of the bailiffs, as he turned his eyes from that wife he never more expected to behold. She fainted at the moment he left the room, and it was many minutes ere I had power to approach her. The long continuance of her fit, at length recalled my distracted thoughts; but I had no restoratives to apply, no assistance to recover her, for my eldest brother had followed my father, and the rest of the children, terrified by the scene they had witnessed, wept together in a corner of the room. I at last recollected a lady who lived nearly opposite to us, and from whom I hoped to procure some relief for her: nothing but the present emergency could have made me apply to her, for the attention she had paid us on first coming to Mr. Heathfield’s was entirely withdrawn after his death. Pride however was forgotten at the present moment, and I flew to her house.—The servant shewed me into a parlour, where she, her daughters, and a young clergyman I had never before seen, were sitting at tea. I could not bring myself to mention my distress

before a stranger, and accordingly begged to speak to her in another room; but she told me in a blunt manner, I might speak there. In a low and faltering voice, which sighs and tears often impeded, I acquainted her of what had happened, the situation of my mother, and requested a cordial for her. How great was my confusion when she declared aloud all I had told her, and turning to her daughter, bid her give me a part of a bottle of wine, 'Aye, aye,' cried she, "I always thought things would turn out so; it was really very foolish of Mr. Heathfield to bring you to this house, and lead you all into such expences!" I listened to no more, but taking the wine with a silent pang, retired.

"I had not been many minutes returned, and was kneeling by the bed-side of my mother, who began to show some symptoms of returning life, when a gentle knock came to the hall door: I supposed it my brother, and bid one of the children to fly to open it. What was my surprise when in a few minutes she returned, followed by the young clergyman I had just seen! I started from my kneeling posture, and my looks expressed my wonder. He approached, and in the soft accent of benevolence, apologized for his intrusion; but said, he came with a hope and a wish that he might be serviceable. Oh! how soothing was his voice! Oh! how painfully pleasing the voice of tenderness to the wretched! The tears which pride and indignation had suspended but a few moments before, again began to flow.

"But I will not dwell upon my feelings; suffice it to say, that every attention which could mitigate my wretchedness, he paid, and that his efforts, aided by mine, soon restored my mother. His looks, his manners, his profession, all conspired to calm her spirits, and she blessed the power which so unexpectedly had given us a friend. My brother returned from my father merely to inquire how we were, and to go back to him directly. The stranger requested permission

to accompany him ; a request most pleasing to us, as we trusted his soothing attention would have the same effect upon his sorrowing heart as it had upon ours. Scarcely were they gone, ere a man arrived from a neighbouring hotel with a basket loaded with wine and provisions ; but to enumerate every instance of this young man's goodness, would be encroaching upon your patience ; in short, by his care my mother in a few days was able to be carried to my father's prison. Mrs. Connel, who on the first intimation of our distress, had come to us, took me into the house at a stated salary, which was to be given to my parents, and the rest of the children were to continue with them. My mother desired me one evening to take a walk with the children to Kensington, as she thought them injured by constant confinement. Our friend attended us, and in our way thither, informed me that he must soon leave town, as he was but a country curate, and his leave of absence from his rector was expired : it was above a month since we had known him, during which time his attentions were unremitting, and he was a source of comfort to us all. A sudden chill came over my heart as he spoke, and every sorrow at that moment seemed aggravated. On entering Kensington gardens, I seated myself on a little rising mount, for I felt trembling and fatigued, and he sat beside me.—Never had I before felt so oppressed, and my tears gushed forth in spite of my efforts to restrain them. Something said of their being occasioned by the recollection of the period when my parents enjoyed the charming scene I now contemplated along with him. 'Would to Heaven,' cried he, 'I could restore them again to the enjoyment of it.'

"Ah, said I, they already lie under unreturnable obligations to you ; in losing you, added I, involuntarily, they would lose their only comfort. 'Since then, cried he, 'you flatter me by saying it is in my power to give them comfort, oh ! let them have a

constant claim upon me for it. Oh ; Emily,' he continued, taking my hand, 'let them be my parents as well as your's ; then will their too scrupulous delicacy be conquered, and they will receive, as a right, what they now consider as a favour.' I felt my cheeks glow with blushes, but still did not perfectly conceive his meaning. 'My destiny is humble,' he continued ; 'was it otherwise, I should long since have entreated you to share it with me ; could you be prevailed on to do so, you would give it pleasures it never yet experienced.' He paused for a reply, but I was unable to give one.

"Ah ! madam, how little necessity either was there for one, my looks, my confusion betrayed my feelings. He urged me to speak, and at last I acknowledged I should not hesitate to share his destiny, but for my parents, who by such a measure would lose my assistance.—'Oh ! do not think,' cried he, 'I would ever wish to tempt you into any situation which should make you neglect them.' He then proceeded to say, that though unable at present to liberate them, yet he trusted that if they consented to our union, he should, by economy, be enabled to contribute more essentially to their support than I could do, and also be able in a short time to discharge their debts. His proposals were made known to them, and met their warmest approbation. The pleasure they derived from them was more on my account than their own, as the idea of having me so settled removed a weight of anxiety from their minds ; some of my brothers and sisters should live with us, he said, and promised my time should be chiefly spent in doing fine works, which should be sent to Mrs. Connel to dispose of for my parents ; and also that, from time to time, I should visit them till I had the power of bringing them to my cottage, for such he described his residence.

"He was compelled to go to the country, but it was settled he should return in a short time, and have every thing finally settled. In about a week

after his departure, as I was returning one morning from a lady's where I had been on a message from Mrs. Connel, a gentleman joined me in the street, and with rude familiarity, endeavoured to enter into conversation with me. I endeavoured to shake him off, but could not succeed, and hastened home with the utmost expedition, whither I saw he followed me. I thought no more of the incident till about two days after I saw him enter the shop, and heard him inquire of Mrs. Connel about her lodgings, which to my great mortification he immediately took, for I could not help suspecting he had some improper motive for taking them: I resolved, however, if such a motive really existed, to disappoint it by keeping out of his way; but all my vigilance was unavailing, he was continually on the watch for me, and I could not go up or down stairs without being insulted by him. I at length informed Mrs. Connel of his conduct, and entreated her to fulfil the sacred trust her friends reposed in her, when they gave me to her care, by terminating the insults of Mr. Siphthorpe. Alas! could I have possibly foreseen the consequences that would have followed my application to her, I should have borne those insults in silence. She has already informed you of them. Oh! madam, when the letter came which dissolved a promise so cheerfully, so fondly given, every prospect of felicity was in a moment overshadowed! For a long time I resisted every effort that was made to prevail on me to marry Siphthorpe; but when at last my mother said she was sorry to find my feelings less than his, who had so generously resigned me, that my father might be extricated from his difficulties, I shrunk with agony at the rebuke. I wondered, I was shocked, how I could have so long hesitated to open the prison gates of my father, and determined from that moment to sacrifice myself for him; for oh! Miss Donald, it is a sacrifice of the most dreadful nature I am about making. Siphthorpe is a man I never could have liked, had my heart even been disengaged."

Amanda felt the truest pity for her young friend, who ended her narrative in tears; but she did not, by yielding entirely to that pity, (as too many girls with tender hearts, but weak heads, might have done) heighten the sorrow of Miss Rushbrook.--She proved her friendship and sympathy more sincerely than she could have done by mere expressions of condolment, which feed the grief they commiserate, in trying to reconcile her to a destiny that seemed irrevocable: she pointed out the claims a parent had upon a child, and dwelt upon the delight a child experienced when conscious of fulfilling those claims. She spoke of the rapture attending the triumph of reason and humanity over self and passion, and mentioned the silent plaudits of the heart as superior to all gratification, or external advantages. She spoke from the real feelings of her soul; she recollected the period at which, to a father's admonition, she had resigned a lover, and had that father been in Captain Rushbrook's situation, and the same sacrifice been demanded from her as from Emily, she felt without hesitation, she would have made it. She was indeed a monitress that had practised, and would practise (was there a necessity for so doing) the lessons she gave, not as poor Ophelia says,

“ Like some ungracious pastors,
Who shew the steep and thorny path to Heav'n,
But take the primrose one themselves.”

The sweet consciousness of this gave energy, and more than usual eloquence to her language; but whilst she wished to inspirit her young friend, she felt from the tenderness of her nature, and the sad situation of her own heart, what that friend must feel from disappointed affection and a reluctant union. Scarcely could she refrain from weeping over a fate so wretched, and which she was tempted to think as dreadful as her own; but a little reflection soon convinced her she had the sad pre-eminence of misery;

for in her fate there were none of those alleviations as in Emily's, which she was convinced must in some degree reconcile her to it; her sufferings, unlike Emily's, would not be rewarded by knowing that they contributed to the comfort of those dearest to her heart.

"Your words, my dear madam," said Emily, "have calmed my spirits, henceforth I will be more resolute in trying to banish regrets from my mind: but I have been inconsiderate to a degree in keeping you so long from rest, after your fatiguing journey."—Amanda indeed appeared at this moment nearly exhausted, and gladly hastened to bed. Her slumbers were short and unrefreshing; the cares which clung to her heart when waking, were equally oppressive whilst sleeping. Lord Mortimer mingled in the meditations of the morning, in the visions of the night, and when she awoke she found her pillow wet with the tears she had shed on his account. Emily was already up, but on Amanda's drawing back the curtain she laid down the book she was reading, and came to her. She saw she looked extremely ill, and imputed this to fatigue, requested she would breakfast in bed; but Amanda who knew her illness proceeded from a cause which neither rest nor assiduous care could cure, refused complying with this request, and immediately dressed herself.

As she stood at the toilet, Emily suddenly exclaimed, "if you have a mind to see Siphthorpe, I will shew him to you now, for he is just going out." Amanda went to the window, which Emily gently opened; but, oh! what was the shock of that moment, when in Siphthorpe she recognized the insidious Belgrave! A shivering horror ran through her veins, and recoiling a few paces, she sunk half fainting, on a chair. Emily, terrified by her appearance, was flying to the bell to ring for assistance, when, by a faint motion of her hand, Amanda prevented her. "I shall soon be better," said she, speaking with difficulty; "but

I will lie down on the bed for a few minutes, and I beg you may go to your breakfast." Emily refused to go, and entreated, that instead of leaving her, she might have breakfast brought up for them both. Amanda assured her she could take nothing at present, and wished for quiet; Emily therefore reluctantly left her. Amanda now endeavoured to compose her distracted thoughts, and quiet the throbbings of her agonized heart, that she might be able to arrange some plan for extricating herself from her present situation, which appeared replete with every danger to her imagination; for from the libertine principles of Belgrave, she could not hope that a new object of pursuit would detach him from her, when he found her so unexpectedly thrown in his way: unprotected as she was, she could not think of openly avowing her knowledge of Belgrave; to discover his baseness, required therefore caution and deliberation, lest in saving Emily from the snare spread for her destruction, she should entangle herself in it; to declare at once his real character, must betray her to him, and though she might banish him from the house, yet unsupported as she was by her friends or kindred, unable to procure the protection of Rushbrook in his present situation however willing he might be to extend it, she trembled to think of the dangers to which, by thus discovering she might expose herself—dangers which the deep treachery and daring effrontery of Belgrave would in all probability prevent her escaping. As the safest measure, she resolved on quitting the house in the course of the day; but without giving any intimation that she meant not to return to it. She recollected a place where there was a probability of her getting lodgings, which would be at once secret and secure; and by an anonymous letter to Captain Rushbrook, she intended to acquaint him of his daughter's danger, and refer him to Sir Charles Bingley, at whose agent's he could receive intelligence of him, for the truth of what she said; her plan concerted, she grew

more composed, and was able, when Emily entered the room with her breakfast, to ask in a seemingly careless manner, when Mr. Siphthorpe was expected back.

“It is very uncertain, indeed,” answered she.

“I must go out in the course of the day,” said Amanda, “about particular business; I may therefore as well prepare myself at once for it.” She accordingly put on her habit, and requested materials for writing from Emily, which were immediately brought and Emily then retired till she had written her letter. Amanda left to herself, hastily unlocked her little trunk, and taking from it two changes of linen, and the will and narrative of Lady Dunreath, she deposited the two former in her pocket, and the two latter in her bosom, then sat down and wrote the following letter to Captain Rushbrook:

“A person who esteems the character of Captain Rushbrook, and the amiable simplicity of his daughter, cautions him to guard that simplicity against the danger which now threatens it, from a wretch, who under the sacred semblance of virtue, designs to fix a sharper sting in the bosom of affliction than adversity ever yet implanted. The worth of Siphthorpe is not more fictitious than his name; his real one is Belgrave; his hand is already another’s, and his character for many years past, marked with instances of deceit, if not equal, at least little inferior to the present. For the truth of these assertions, the writer of the letter refers Captain Rushbrook to Sir Charles Bingley, of——regiment, from whose agent a direction may be procured to him, certain from his honour and sensibility, he will eagerly step forward to save worth and innocence from woe and destruction.”

Amanda’s anxiety about Emily being equal to what she felt for herself, she resolved to leave this letter at Rushbrook’s prison, lest any accident should happen, if it went by any other hands. She was anxious to be gone, but thought it better to wait till to-

wards evening, when there would be the least chance of meeting Belgrave, who at that time would probably be fixed in some place for the remainder of the day. Emily returned in about an hour, and finding Amanda disengaged, requested permission to sit with her. Amanda, in her present agitation, would have preferred solitude, but could not decline the company of the affectionate girl, who in conversing with her, sought to forget the heavy cares which the dreadful idea of an union with Siphthorpe had drawn upon her. Amanda listened with a beating heart to every sound, but no intimation of Belgrave's return reached her ear. At length they were summoned to dinner, but Amanda could not think of going to it, lest she should be seen by him.—To avoid this risk, and also the particularity of a refusal, she determined immediately to go out, and having told Emily her intention, they both descended the stairs together. Emily pressed her exceedingly to stay for dinner, but she positively refused, and left the house with a beating heart, without having answered Emily's question, who desired to know if she would not soon return. Thus perpetually threatened with danger, like a frightened bird, again was she to seek a shelter for her innocent head. She walked with quickness to Oxford street, where she directly procured a carriage, but was so weak and agitated, the coachman was almost obliged to lift her into it. She directed it to the prison; and on reaching it, sent for one of the turnkeys, to whom she gave her letter for Rushbrook, with a particular charge to deliver it immediately to him. She then ordered the carriage to Pall-Mall, where it may be remembered she had once lodged with Lady Greystock. This was the only lodging-house in London she knew, and in it she expected no satisfaction but what would be derived from thinking herself safe, as its mistress was a woman of a most unpleasant temper. She had once been in affluent circumstances, and the remembrance of those cir-

circumstances soured her temper, and rendered her, if not incapable of enjoying, at least unwilling to acknowledge the blessings she yet possessed: on any one in her power she vented her spleen. Her chief pursuit was the gratification of a most insatiate curiosity, and her first delight, relating the affairs, good or bad, which that curiosity dived into. Amanda finding she was within, dismissed the coach, and was shewn by the maid into the back parlour, where she sat. "Oh! dear!" cried she, with a supercilious smile, the moment Amanda entered, without rising from her chair to return her salute, "when did you return to London? And pray may I ask what brought you back to it?"

Amanda was convinced from Mrs. Hansard's altered manner, who had once been servile to a degree to her, that she was perfectly acquainted with her destitute condition, and a heavy sigh burst from her heart at the idea of associating with a woman who had the meanness to treat her ill because of that condition. A chillness crept through her frame when she reflected her sad situation might long compel her to this. Sick, weak, exhausted, she sunk upon a chair, which she had neither been offered nor desired to take.

"Well, Miss, and pray what is your business in town?" again asked Mrs. Hansard, with an increased degree of pertness.

"My business, Madam," replied Amanda, "can be of no consequence to a person not connected with me. My business with you is to know whether you can accommodate me with lodgings?" "Really; well you might have paid me the compliment of saying you would have called at any rate to know how I did. You may guess how greatly flattered an humble being like me would be, by the notice of so amiable a young lady."

These words were pronounced with a kind of anger, that by rousing the pride of Amanda, a little revived her spirits. "I should be glad, Madam,"

said she, with a composed voice, while a faint glow stole over her cheek, "to know whether you can, or choose to accommodate me with lodgings?" "Lord, my dear," replied Mrs. Hansard, "do not be in such a wondrous hurry: take a cup of tea with me, and then we will settle about that business." These words implied, that she would comply with the wish of Amanda; and however disagreeable the asylum, yet to have secured one, cheered her sinking heart. Tea was soon made, which to Amanda, who had touched nothing since breakfast, and but little then, would have been a pleasant refreshment, had she not been tormented and fatigued by the questions of Mrs. Hansard, who laid a thousand baits to betray her into a full confession of what had brought her to London.—Amanda, though a stranger in herself to every species of art, from fatal experience was aware of it in others, and therefore guarded her secret.—Mrs. Hansard, who loved what she called a gossiping cup of tea, sat a tedious time over the tea-table. Amanda, at last mortified and alarmed by some expressions which dropped from her, again ventured to ask if she could be lodged under her roof.

"Are you really serious in that question?" said Mrs. Hansard. There was a certain expression of contempt in her features as she spoke, which shocked Amanda so much that she had not power to reply. "Because if you are, my dear," continued Mrs. Hansard, "you have more assurance than I thought you possessed of, though I always gave you credit for a pretty large share.—Do you think I would ruin my house, which lodges people of the first rank and character, by admitting you into it; you, who it is well known, obtained Lady Greystock's protection from charity, and lost it through misconduct? Poor lady, I had the whole story from her own mouth. She suffered well by having anything to say to you: I always guessed how it would be; notwithstanding your demure look, I saw well enough how you would turn

out. I assure you, to use your own words, if I could accommodate you in my house, it would not answer you at all, for there are no convenient closets in it, in which a lady of your disposition might now and then want to hide a smart young fellow. I advise you, if you have had a tiff with any of your friends to make up the difference, though indeed, if you do not, in such a place as London, you can never be at a loss for such friends. Perhaps you are now beginning to repent of your evil courses, and if I took you into my house, I should suffer as much in my pocket, I suppose, as in my character."

The terrified and distressed look with which Amanda listened to this speech, would have stopped Mrs. Hansard in the middle of it, had she possessed a spark of humanity, even if she believed her (which was not the case) guilty; but lost to the noble, the gentle feelings of humanity, she exulted in the triumph of malice, and rejoiced to have an opportunity of piercing the panting heart of helpless innocence with the sharp darts of insult and unmerited reproach. Amidst the various shocks Amanda had experienced in the short but eventful course of her life, one greater than the present she had never felt;—petrified by Mrs. Hansard's words, it was some time ere she had power to speak. "Gracious Heaven!" exclaimed she, at last looking up to that Heaven she addressed, and which she now considered her only refuge, from evil, "to what trials am I continually exposed, persecuted, insulted, shocked! Oh! what happiness to lay my feeble frame, my woe-struck heart, within that low asylum where malice could no more annoy, deceit no more betray me! I am happy," she continued, starting up, and looking at Mrs. Hansard, "that the accommodation I desired in this house you refused me, for I am now well convinced, from the knowledge of your disposition, that the security my situation requires, I should not have found within it." She hastily quitted the room; but on en-

tering the hall her spirits entirely forsook her at the dreadful idea of having no home to go to; overcome with horror, she sunk in a flood of tears upon one of the hall chairs. A maid who had probably been listening to her mistress's conversation, now came from a front parlour, and as Mrs. Hansard had shut the door after Amanda, addressed her without fear of been overheard. "Bless me, Miss," said she, "are you crying? Why, Lord! surely you would not mind what old Blouzy in the parlour says? I promise you, if we minded her, we should have red eyes here every day in the week. Do, pray Miss, tell me if I can be of any service to you?"

Amanda in a voice scarcely articulate, thanked her, and said in a few minutes she should be better able to speak. To seek lodgings at this late hour was not to be thought of, except she wished to run into the very dangers she had wanted to avoid, and Mrs. Connel's house returned to her recollection, as the impossibility of procuring a refuge in any other was confirmed in her mind; she began to think it could not be so dangerous as her fears in the morning had represented it to be; ere this she thought Belgrave (for since the delivery of the letter there had been time enough for such a proceeding) might be banished from it; if not, she had a chance of concealing herself, and even if discovered, she believed Mrs. Connel would protect her from his open insults, whilst she trusted her own precaution would, under Heaven, defeat his secret schemes, should he again contrive any: she therefore resolved, or rather necessity compelled her, for could she have avoided it she would not have done so, to return to Mrs. Connel's; she accordingly requested the maid to procure her a carriage, and rewarded her for her trouble. As she was returning to Mrs. Connel's, she endeavoured to calm her spirits, and quell her apprehensions. When the carriage stopped, and the maid appeared, she could scarcely prevent herself ere she

alighted, from inquiring whether any one but the family was within; conscious, however, that such a question might create suspicion, and that suspicion would naturally excite inquiries, she checked herself, and re-entered, though with trembling limbs, that house from whence in the morning she had fled with such terror.

CHAPTER XLVIII.

Why thou poor mourner, in what baleful corner
 Hast thou been talking with that witch, the night!
 On what cold stone hast thou been stretched along,
 Gathering the grumbling winds about thy head,
 To mix with theirs the accents of thy woes! *Otway.*

AMANDA had not reached the parlour when the door opened, and Mrs. Connel came from it. "Oh! oh! Miss," cried she, "so you are returned; I protest I was beginning to think you had stolen a march upon us." There was a rude bluntness in this speech which confounded Amanda; and her mind misgave her that all was not right. "Come," continued Mrs. Connel, "come in, Miss, I assure you I have been very impatient for your return." Amanda's fears increased. She followed Mrs. Connel in silence into the parlour, where she beheld an elderly woman, of a pleasing but emaciated appearance, who seemed in great agitation and distress. How she could possibly have any thing to say to this woman, she could not conjecture, and yet an idea that she had, instantly darted into her mind; she sat down trembling in every limb, and waited with impatience for an explanation of this scene. After a general silence of a few minutes, the stranger looking at Amanda, said, "My daughter, Madam, has informed me we are indebted to your bounty, I am therefore happy at an opportunity of discharging the debt." These words announced Mrs. Rushbrook, but Amanda was confounded at her manner; its coolness and forma-

lity were more expressive of dislike and severity, than of gentleness and gratitude. Mrs. Rushbrook rose as she spoke, and offered a note to her.—Speechless from astonishment, Amanda had not power either to decline or accept it, and it was laid on a table before her.

“Allow me, Madam,” said Mrs. Rushbrook, as she resumed her seat, “to ask if your real name is Donald?” Amanda’s presentiment of under-hand doing was now verified; it was evident to her that their author was Belgrave, and that he had been too successful in contriving them.

Amanda now appeared to have reached the crisis of her fate;—in all the various trials she had hitherto experienced, she had still some stay, some hope to support her weakness and sooth her sorrows: when groaning under the injuries her character sustained by the success of an execrable plot, she had the consolation to think an idolizing father would shelter her from further insult; when deprived of that father, tender friends stepped forward, who mingled tears of sympathy with hers, and poured the balm of pity on her sorrowing heart; when torn from the beloved object enshrined within that heart, while her sick soul languished under the heavy burthen of existence, again did the voice of friendship penetrate its gloom, and, though it could not remove, alleviated its sufferings; now helpless, unprotected, she saw a dreadful storm ready to burst over her devoted head, without one hope to cheer, one stretched-out arm to shield her from its violence; surrounded by strangers, prejudiced against her, she could not think that her plain, unvarnished tale would gain their credence, or prevail on them to protect her from the wretch whose machinations had ruined her in their estimation: the horrors of her situation all at once assailing her mind, overpowered its faculties; a kind of mental sickness seized her, she leaned her throbbing head upon her hand, and a deep groan burst from her agonized heart.

"You see," said Mrs. Connel, after a long silence, "she cannot brave this discovery."

Amanda raised her head at these words; she had grown a little more composed. "The Being in whom I trust," she said to herself, "and whom I never wilfully offended, will still, I doubt not, as heretofore, protect me from danger."—Mrs. Rushbrook's unanswered question still sounded in her ears. "Allow me, Madam," she cried, turning to her, "to ask your reason for inquiring whether my real name is Donald?" "Oh, Lord! my dear," said Mrs. Connel, addressing Mrs. Rushbrook, "you need not pester yourself or her with any more questions about the matter, her question is an answer in itself." "I am of your opinion, indeed," exclaimed Mrs. Rushbrook, "and think any farther inquiry needless." "I acknowledge, Madam," said Amanda, whose voice grew firmer from the consciousness of never having acted improperly, "that my name is not Donald. I must also do myself the justice to declare (let me be credited or not) that my real one was not concealed from any motive which could deserve reproach or censure. My situation is peculiarly distressing. My only consolation amidst my difficulties is the idea of never having drawn them upon myself by imprudence." "I do not want, Madam," replied Mrs. Rushbrook, "to inquire into your situation: you have been candid in one instance, I hope you will be equally so in another. Pray, Madam," handing to Amanda the letter she had written to Rushbrook, "is this your writing?" "Yes, Madam," answered Amanda, whose pride was roused by the contempt she met, "it is my writing." "And pray," said Mrs. Rushbrook, looking steadfastly at her, while her voice grew more severe, "what was your motive for writing this letter?" "I think, Madam," cried Amanda, "the letter explains that." "A pretty explanation, truly!" exclaimed Mrs. Connel; "and so you would try to vilify the poor gentleman's cha-

racter; but, Miss, we have had an explanation you little dream of; aye, we found you out, notwithstanding your slyness in writing like one of the Madam's in a Novel, a bit of a letter without ever a name to it. Mr. Siphthorpe knew directly who it came from. Ah! poor gentleman, he allowed you wit enough, a pity there is not more goodness with it; he knows you very well to his cost." "Yes," said Amanda, "he knows I am a being whose happiness he disturbed, but whose innocence he never triumphed over. He knows that like an evil Genii, he has pursued my wandering footsteps, heaping sorrow upon sorrow on me by his machinations; but he also knows, when encompassed with those sorrows, perplexed with those machinations, I rose superior to them all, and with uniform contempt and abhorrence rejected his offers." "Depend upon it," cried Mrs. Connel, "she has been an actress." "Yes, Madam," said Amanda, whose struggling voice confessed the anguish of her soul, "upon a stage where I have seen a sad variety of scenes." "Come, come," exclaimed Mrs. Connel, "confess all about yourself and Siphthorpe; full confession will entitle you to pardon." "It behoves me, indeed," said Amanda, "to be explicit, my character requires it, and my wish," she continued, turning to Mrs. Rushbrook, "to save you from a fatal blow, demands it." She then proceeded to relate every thing she knew concerning Belgrave; but she had the mortification to find her short and simple story received with every mark of incredulity. "Beware, Madam," said she to Mrs. Rushbrook, "of this infatuation, I adjure you beware of the consequences of it: Oh! doom not your innocent, your reluctant Emily to destruction; draw not upon your own head by such a deed horrible and excruciating anguish. Why does not Mr. Siphthorpe, if I must call him so, appear, and in my presence support his allegations?" "I asked him to do so," replied Mrs. Rushbrook; "but he has

feeling, and he wished not to see your distress, however merited it might be." "No, Madam," replied Amanda, "he refused, because he knew that without shrinking he could not behold the innocent he has so abused; because he knew the conscious colouring of his cheek would betray the guilty feelings of his soul. Again I repeat he is not what he appears to be. I refer you for the truth of my words to Sir Charles Bingley; I feel for you, though you have not felt for me. I know from false representations, you think me a poor misguided creature; but was I even so, my too evident anguish might surely have excited pity. Pardon me, Madam, if I say your conduct to me has been most unkind; the gentle virtues are surely those best fitting a female breast; she that shews leniency to a fallen fellow creature, fulfils the Divine precept; the tear she sheds over her frailties is consecrated in the sight of Heaven, and her compassion draws a blessing on her own head. Oh! Madam, I once looked forward to a meeting with you, far, far different from the present one: I once flattered myself, that from the generous friendship of Mr. and Mrs. Rushbrook, I should derive support and consolation; but this, like every other hope, is disappointed."—Amanda's voice faltered at these last words, and tears again trickled down her lovely cheeks; a faint glow tinged the pale cheek of Mrs. Rushbrook at Amanda's accusation of unkindness; she bent her eyes to the ground as if conscious it was merited, and it was many minutes ere she could again look on the trembling creature before her. "Perhaps," said she, at last, "I may have spoken too severely, but it must be allowed I had great provocation; friendship and gratitude could not avoid resenting such shocking charges as yours against Siphorpe." "For my part, I wonder you spoke so mildly to her," exclaimed Mrs. Connel: "I protest in future I shall be guarded who I admit into my house. I declare she seemed so distressed at the

idea of going amongst strangers, that, sooner than let her do so, I believe, if Miss Emily had not, I should have offered her part of my bed; but this distress was all a pretext to get into the house with Mr. Siphthorpe, that she might try to entangle him in her snares again.—Well, I am determined she shall not stay another night under my roof. Aye, you may stare as you please, Miss, but you shall march directly; you are not so ignorant about London, I dare say, as you pretend to be.”

Mrs. Connel rose as she spoke, and approached her with a look which seemed to say she would put her threat into execution. It was Amanda's intention to quit the house the next morning, but to be turned from it at such an hour, a wanderer in the street, the idea was replete with horror!—She started up, and retreating a few paces, looked at Mrs. Connel with a kind of melancholy wildness. “Yes,” repeated Mrs. Connel, “I say you shall march directly.” The wretched Amanda's head grew giddy, her sight failed, her limbs refused to support her, and she would have fallen to the ground, had not Mrs. Rushbrook, who perceived her situation, timely caught her. She was replaced on a chair, and water sprinkled on her face: “Be composed, my dear,” said Mrs. Rushbrook, whose softened voice proclaimed the return of her compassion, “you shall not leave this house to-night, I promise in the name of Mrs. Connel; she is a good-natured woman, and would not aggravate your distress.” “Aye, Lord knows, good-nature is my foible,” exclaimed Mrs. Connel; “so Miss, as Mrs. Rushbrook has promised, you may stay here to night.” Amanda opening her languid eyes, and raising her head from Mrs. Rushbrook's bosom, said in a low tremulous voice, “To-morrow, Madam, I shall depart. Oh! would to Heaven,” cried she, clasping her hands together, and bursting into an agony of tears, “before to-morrow I could be rid of the heavy burthen that oppresses

me!" "Well, we have had wailing and weeping enough to night," said Mrs. Connel, "so, Miss, you may take one of the candles off the table, and go to your chamber if you choose."

Amanda did not require to have this permission repeated. She arose, and taking the light, left the parlour. With feeble steps she ascended to the little chamber; but here all was dark and solitary, no cheerful fire sent forth an animating blaze; no gentle Emily, like the mild genius of benevolence, appeared to offer, with undissembled kindness, her little attentions; forsaken, faint, the pale child of misery laid down the candle, and seating herself at the foot of the bed, gave way to deep and agonizing sorrow.

"Was I ever," she asked herself, "blessed with friends, who valued my existence as their own, who called me the beloved of their hearts! Oh! yes," she groaned, "once such friends were mine, and the sad remembrance of them aggravates my present misery. Oh! happy is our ignorance of futurity. Oh! my father, had you been permitted to read the awful volume of fate, the page marked with your Amanda's destiny would have rendered your existence miserable, and made you wish a thousand times the termination of hers.

"Oh, Oscar! from another hand than mine must you receive the deed which shall entitle you to independence: my trials sink me to the grave, to that grave which, but for the sweet hope of again seeing you, I should long since have wished myself." The chamber door opened; she turned her eyes to it in expectation of seeing Emily, but was disappointed on perceiving only the maid of the house. "Oh! dear Ma'am," cried she, going up to Amanda, "I declare it quite grieves me to see you in such a situation. Poor Miss Emily is just in as bad a plight. Well, it is no matter, but I think both the old ladies will be punished for plaguing you in this manner. Madam Rushbrook will be sorry enough, when after

giving her daughter to Mr. Siphthorpe, she finds he is not what he seems to be." Amanda shrank with horror from the idea of Emily's destruction, and by a motion of her hand, signified to the maid her dislike to the subject. "Well, Ma'am," she continued, "Miss Emily, as I was saying, is quite in as bad a plight as yourself; they have clapped her into my mistress's chamber, which she durst not leave without running the risk of bringing their tongues upon her: however, she contrived to see me, and sent you this note. Amanda took it, and read the following lines:

"I hope my dear Miss Donald will not doubt my sincerity, when I declare that all my sorrows are heightened by knowing I have been the occasion of trouble to her. I have heard of the unworthy treatment she has received in this house, and her intention of quitting it to-morrow; knowing her averseness to lodge in a place she is unacquainted with, I have been speaking to the maid about you, and had the satisfaction to hear, that through her means, my dear Miss Donald might be safely accommodated for a short time, long enough, however, to permit her to look out for an eligible situation. I refer you for particulars of the conversation, to the maid, whose fidelity may be relied on. To think it may be useful to my dear Miss Donald, affords me the only pleasure I am now capable of enjoying. In her esteem may I ever retain the place of a sincere and affectionate friend.

E. R."

"And where is the place I can be lodged in?" eagerly asked Amanda. "Why, Ma'am," said the maid, "I have a sister who is a house maid at a very grand place on the Richmond-road. All the family are now gone to Brighton, and she is left alone in the house, where you would be very welcome to take up your residence till you could get one to your mind. My sister is a sage, sober body, and would do everything in her power to please and oblige you, and you would be

as snug and secure with her as in a house of your own: and poor Miss Emily begged you would go to her, till you could get lodgings with people whose characters you know; and indeed, Ma'am, it is my humble opinion, it would be safe and pleasant for you to do so, and if you consent, I will conduct you there to-morrow morning, and I am sure, Ma'am, I shall be happy if I have the power of serving you." Like the lady in *Comus*, Amanda might have said,

I take thy word,
 And trust thy honest offered courtesy;
 For in a place
 Less warranted than this, or less secure
 I cannot be, that I should fear to change it:
 Eye me bless'd Providence, and square my trial
 To my proportion'd strength.

To take refuge in this manner in any one's house was truly repugnant to the feelings of Amanda; but sad necessity conquered her scrupulous delicacy, and she asked the maid at what hour in the morning she should be ready for her.

"I shall come to you, Ma'am," answered she, "as soon as I think there is a carriage on the stand, and then we can go together to get one; but I protest, Ma'am, you look badly; I wish you would allow me to assist in undressing you, for I am sure you want a little rest; I dare say, for all my mistress said, if you choose it, I could get a little wine from her to make whey for you."—Amanda refused this, but accepted her offer of assistance, for she was so overpowered by the scenes of the day, as to be almost unequal to any exertion. The maid retired after she had seen her to bed. Amanda entreated her to be punctual to an early hour, and also requested her to give her most affectionate love to Miss Rushbrook and her sincere thanks for the kind solicitude she had expressed about her. Her rest was now as on the preceding night, broken and disturbed by frightful visions,—she arose, pale, trembling, and unrefresh-

ed. The maid came to her soon after she was dressed, and she immediately accompanied her down stairs, trembling as she went, lest Belgrave should suddenly make his appearance, and either prevent her departure, or follow her to her new residence. She left the house, however, without meeting any creature, and soon obtained the shelter of a carriage.

As they proceeded, Amanda besought the maid, who seemed perfectly acquainted with every thing relative to Belgrave, to tell Miss Rushbrook to believe her assertions against him, if she wished to save herself from destruction. The maid assured her she would, and declared she always suspected Mr. Siphthorpe was not as good as he should be.—Amanda soon found herself at the end of her little journey. The house was elegant and spacious, with a short avenue before it, planted with chesnuts. The maid's sister was an elderly, plain-looking woman, who received Amanda with every appearance of respect, and conducted her into a handsome parlour, where a neat breakfast was laid out. "I took care, Ma'am," said the maid, smiling, "to apprise my sister last night of the honour she was to have this morning, and I am sure she will do every thing in her power to oblige you." "I thank you both," cried Amanda, with her usual sweetness; but while she spoke a straggling tear stole down her lovely cheek at the idea of that forlorn situation, which had thus cast her upon the kindness of strangers, strangers who were themselves the children of poverty and dependence: "I hope, however," she continued, "I shall not long be a trouble to either, as it is my intention immediately to look out for a lodging amongst the cottages in this neighbourhood, till I can settle my affairs to return to my friends. In the mean time I must insist on making some recompense for the attention I have received, and the expense I have put you to." She accordingly forced a present upon each, for both the women appeared unwilling to accept

them, and Mrs. Deborah, the maid's sister, said it was quite unnecessary at present to think of leaving the house, as the family would not return to it for six weeks. Amanda, however, was resolved on doing what she had said, and she could not conquer her repugnance to continue in a stranger's house. Mrs. Connel's maid departed in a few minutes; of the breakfast prepared for her, Amanda could only take some tea; her head ached violently, and her whole frame felt disordered. Mrs. Deborah seeing her dejection, proposed shewing her the house and garden, which were very fine, to amuse her; but Amanda declined the proposal at present, saying she thought if she lay down she should be better. She was immediately conducted to an elegant chamber, where Mrs. Deborah left her, saying, she would prepare some little nice thing for her dinner, which she hoped would tempt her to eat.

Amanda now tried to compose her spirits by reflecting that she was in a place of security; but their agitation was not to be subdued from the sleep into which mere fatigue threw her; she was continually starting in inexpressible terror. Mrs. Deborah came up two or three times to know how she was, and at last appeared with dinner. She laid a small table by the bedside, and besought Amanda to rise and try to eat it; there was a friendliness in her manner, which recalled to Amanda's recollection her faithful nurse Edwin, and she sighed to think that the shelter of her humble cottage she could no more enjoy (should such a shelter be required) from its vicinity to Tudor Hall, near which every feeling of propriety and tenderness must forbid her residing; the sad remembrance which now reviving in her mind, drew tears from her, and rendered her unable to eat.--She thanked Mrs. Deborah for her attention; but anxious to be alone, said she would no longer detain her; yet no sooner was she alone than she found solitude insupportable; she could not sleep, the anguish of her

mind was so great, and arose with the idea that a walk in the garden might be of use to her. As she was descending the stairs she heard, notwithstanding the door was shut, a man's voice from a front parlour. She started, for she thought it was a voice familiar to her ear; with a light foot, and a throbbing heart, she turned into a parlour at the foot of the stairs which communicated with the other. Here she listened, and soon had her fears confirmed by recollecting the voice to be that of Belgrave's servant, whom she had often seen in Devonshire. She listened with that kind of horror, which the trembling wretch may be supposed to feel when about hearing a sentence he expects to be dreadful.

"Aye, I assure you," cried the man, "we are blown up at Mrs. Connel's, but that is of little consequence to us; the colonel thinks the game now in view better than that he has lost; so to night you may expect him in a chase and four to carry off your fair guest." "I declare I am glad of it," said Mrs. Deborah, "for I think she will die soon." "Die soon!" repeated he: "Oh! yes, indeed, great danger of that—" And he added something else, which being delivered with a violent burst of laughter, Amanda could not hear; she thought she heard them moving towards the door; she instantly slipped from the parlour, and ascending the stairs in breathless haste, stopped outside the chamber door to listen. In a few minutes she heard them coming into the hall, and the man softly let out by Mrs. Deborah. Amanda now entered the chamber, and closed the door, and knowing a guilty conscience is easily alarmed she threw herself on the bed, lest Mrs. Deborah, if she found her up, should have her suspicions awakened. Her desperate situation inspired her with strength and courage, and she trusted by presence of mind, to be able to extricate herself from it; it was her intention, if she effected her escape, to proceed directly to London, though the idea of

entering it without a certain place to go to, was shocking to her imagination; yet she thought it a more secure place for her than any of the neighbouring cottages which might be searched. Mrs. Deborah, as she expected, soon came up to her. Amanda involuntarily shuddered at her appearance, but knowing her safety depended on the concealment of her feelings, she forced herself to converse with the treacherous creature. She at last arose from the bed, declaring she had indulged her langour too much, and after a few turns about the room, went to the window, and pretended to be engrossed in admiring the garden. "There is a great deal of fruit in the garden," said she, turning to Mrs. Deborah; "if I did not think it encroached too much on your kindness, I should ask for a nectarine or two." "Dear, ma'am," replied Mrs. Deborah, "you are heartily welcome. I declare I should have offered them to you, only I thought you would like a turn in the garden and pull them yourself." "No," said Amanda, "I cannot at present."—Mrs. Deborah went off, and Amanda watched at the window till she saw her at the very end of the garden; she then snatched up her hat and tied it on with a handkerchief, better to conceal her face, then hastily descended the stairs, and locked the back door to prevent an immediate pursuit.—She ran down the avenue, nor flagged in her course till she had got some paces from it; she was then compelled to do so, as much from weakness as from fear of attracting notice, if she went on in such a wild manner. She started at the sound of every carriage, and hastily averted her head as they passed; but she reached London without any alarm but what her own fears gave her. The hour was now late and gloomy, and warned Amanda of the necessity there was for exertions to procure a lodging. Some poor women she saw retiring from their little fruit stands drew a shower of tears from her, to think her situation was more wretched than theirs, whom

but a few days before she should have considered as objects of compassion. She knew at such an hour she would only be received into houses of an inferior description, and looked for one in which she could think there might be a chance of gaining admittance. She at last came to a small, mean-looking house: "This humble roof, I think," cried she, "will not disdain to shelter an unhappy wanderer!" She turned into the shop, where butter and cheese were displayed, and where an elderly woman sat knitting behind the counter. She arose immediately, as if from surprise and respect at Amanda's appearance who in universal agitation leaned against the door for support, unable for some minutes to speak.—At last, in faltering accents, whilst over her pale face a crimson blush was diffused, she said, "I should be glad to know if you have any lodgings to let?"

The woman instantly dropped into her seat, and looked steadfastly at Amanda, "This is a strange hour," cried she, "for any decent body to come looking for lodgings!" "I am as sensible of that as you can be," said Amanda; "but peculiar circumstances have obliged me to it; if you can accommodate me, I can assure you you will not have reason to repent doing so." "Oh! I do not know how that may be," cried she; "it is natural for a body to speak a good word for themselves; however, if I do let you a room, for I have only one to spare, I shall expect to be paid for it before-hand." "You shall, indeed," said Amanda. "Well, I will shew it you," said she. She accordingly called a little girl to watch the shop, and taking a candle went up, before Amanda, a narrow winding flight of stairs, and conducted her into a room, whose dirty, miserable appearance made her involuntarily shrink back, as if from the den of wretchedness itself. She tried to subdue the disgust it inspired her with, by reflecting, that after the imminent danger she had escaped, she should be happy to procure any asylum she could consider safe; she

also tried to reconcile herself to it, by reflecting that in the morning she should quit it.

“Well, ma’am,” said the woman, “the price of the room is neither more nor less than one guinea per week, and if you do not like it, you are very welcome not to stay.” “I have no objection to the price,” replied Amanda; “but I hope you have quiet people in the house.” “I flatter myself, ma’am,” said the woman drawing up her head, “there is never a house in the parish can boast a better name than mine.” “I am glad to hear it,” answered Amanda, “and I hope you are not offended by the inquiry.” She now put her hand in her pocket for the purse, to give the expected guinea, but the purse was not there. She sat down on the side of the bed, and searched the other, but with as little success. She pulled out the contents of both, but no purse was to be found. “Now---now,” cried she, clasping her hands together, in an agony which precluded reflection, “now---now, I am lost indeed! My purse is stolen,” she continued, “and I cannot give you the promised guinea.” “No, nor never could, I suppose,” exclaimed the woman. “Ah! I suspected all along what you were; and so you was glad my house had a good name? I shall take care it does not lose that name by lodging you.” “I conjure you,” cried Amanda, starting up, and laying her hand on the woman’s. “I conjure you to let me stay this night; you will not, you shall not lose by doing so. I have things of value in a trunk in town, for which I will this instant give you a direction.” “Your trunk;” replied the woman, in a scornful tone, “oh! yes, you have a trunk with things of value in it, as much as you have a purse in your pocket. A pretty story indeed: but I know too much of the ways of the world to be deceived now-a-days---so march directly.”

Amanda again began to entreat, but the woman interrupted her, and declared, if she did not depart

directly, she would be sorry for it.---Amanda instantly ceased her importunities, and in trembling silence followed her down stairs.---Oppressed with weakness, she involuntarily hesitated in the shop, which the woman perceiving, she rudely seized her, and pushing her from it, shut the door. Amanda could not now, as in former exigencies, consider what was to be done. Alas! if even capable of reflection, she could have suggested no plan, which there was a hope of accomplishing; the powers of her mind were overwhelmed with horror and anguish; she moved mechanically along, nor stopped till from weakness she sunk upon the step of a door, against which she leaned her head in a kind of lethargy; but from this she was suddenly roused by two men who stopped before her. Death alone could have conquered her terrors of Belgrave. She instantly concluded these to be him and his man. She started up, uttered a faint scream, and calling upon Heaven to defend her, was springing past them, when her hand was suddenly caught. She made a feeble but unsuccessful effort to disengage it, and overcome by terror and weakness, fell, though not fainting, unable to support herself, upon the bosom of him who had arrested her course:—"Gracious Heaven!" cried he, "I have heard that voice before."

Amanda raised her head:---"Sir Charles Bingley!" she exclaimed. The feeling of joy, surprise, and shame, that pervaded her whole soul, and thrilled through her frame, were in its present weak state too much for it, and she again sunk upon his shoulder. The joy of unexpected protection---for protection she was convinced she should receive from Sir Charles Bingley, was conquered by reflecting on the injurious ideas her present situation must excite in his mind, ideas she feared she should never be able to remove, so strongly were appearances against her.

"Gracious Heaven!" exclaimed Sir Charles, "is

this Miss Fitzalan? Oh! this," he cried, in a tone of deep dejection, "is indeed a meeting of horror!" A deep convulsive sob from Amanda alone proclaimed her sensibility, for she lay motionless in his arms --- arms which involuntarily encircled and enfolded her to a heart that throbbed with intolerable anguish on her account. His friend stood all amazed, a silent spectator of the scene; the raillery which he had been on the point of uttering at seeing Amanda, as he thought, so premeditatedly fall into the arms of his companion, was stopped by the sudden exclamation of Sir Charles; though the face of Amanda was concealed, the glimmering of a lamp over their heads, gave him a view of her fine form, and the countenance of Sir Charles, as he bent over her, full of sorrow and dismay.

"Miss Fitzalan," cried Sir Charles, after the silence of a minute, "you are ill, allow me to have the pleasure of seeing you home." "Home!" repeated Amanda, in the slow and hollow voice of despair, and raising her languid head, "alas! I have no home to go to."

Every surmise of horror which Sir Charles had formed from seeing her in her present situation, was now confirmed.—He groaned, he shuddered, and scarcely able to stand, was obliged to lean with the lovely burden he supported against the rails. He besought his friend either to procure a chair or coach in which he might have her conveyed to a house where he knew he could gain her admittance. Touched by his distress, and the powerful impulse of humanity, his friend instantly went to comply with his request.

The silence of Amanda Sir Charles imputed to shame and illness, and grief and delicacy forbade him to notice it. His friend returned in a few minutes with a coach, and Sir Charles then found that Amanda's silence did not altogether proceed from the motives he had ascribed it to, for she had fainted on his

bosom. She was lifted into the carriage, and he again received her in his arms.—On the carriage stopping, he committed her to the care of his friend, whilst he stepped into the house to procure her a reception. In a few minutes he returned with a maid, who assisted him in carrying her up stairs; but on entering the drawing-room, how great was his amazement when a voice suddenly exclaimed, “Oh, merciful Powers! this is Miss Donald!” It was indeed to Mrs. Connel’s house, and to the care of the Rushbrooks, whom his bounty had released from prison, he had brought her. He had previously informed them of the situation in which he had found her, little suspecting at the time, she was the Miss Donald they mentioned being under such obligations to.

“It is I, it is I,” cried Mrs. Rushbrook, gazing on her with mingled horror and anguish, “it is I have been the occasion of her distress, and never shall I forgive myself for it.” “Oh! my preserver! my friend! my benefactress!” said Emily, clasping her in an agony of tears to her bosom, “is it thus your Emily beholds you!” Amanda was laid upon a couch, and her hat being removed, displayed a face which with the paleness of death, had all the wildness of despair; a wildness that denoted more expressively than language could have done, the conflicts her spirit had endured; heavy sighs announced her having recovered from her fainting fit; but her eyes still continued closed, and her head, too weak to be self-supported, rested against the arm of the couch. Mrs. Rushbrook and her daughter hung over her in inexpressible agonies. If they were thus affected, oh! how was Sir Charles Bingley distressed! Oh! how was his heart, which loved her with the most impassioned tenderness, agonized! As he bent over the couch, the big tear trickled down his manly cheek, and fell upon the cold pale face he contemplated. He softly asked himself, is this Amanda? Is this she, whom but a short time ago I beheld moving with

unequaled elegance, adorned with unrivalled beauty, whom my heart worshipped as the first of women, and sought to unite its destiny to, as the surest means of rendering that destiny happy? Oh! what a change is here! How feeble is that form! how hollow is that cheek! how heavy are those eyes, whose languid glance speak incurable anguish of soul! Oh, Amanda, was the being present who first led you into error, what horror and remorse must seize his soul at seeing the consequences of that error! "Has this unhappy young creature," asked Rushbrook, who had approached the couch and viewed her with the truest pity, "no connections that could be prevailed on to save her?"

"None that I know of," replied Sir Charles; "her parents are both dead." "Happy are the parents," resumed Rushbrook, "who, shrouded in the dust, cannot see the misfortunes of their children—the fall of such a child as this!" glancing his tearful eyes, as he spoke, on his daughter's.

"And pray, sir," said Mrs. Connel, who was chaffing her temples with lavender "if she recovers what is to become of her?" "It shall be my care," cried Sir Charles, "to procure her an asylum. Yes, madam," he continued, looking at her with an expression of mingled tenderness and grief, "he that must for ever mourn thy fate, will try to mitigate it; but does she not want medical assistance?" "I think not," replied Mrs. Connel; "it is want of nourishment and rest has thrown her into her present situation." "Want of nourishment and rest!" repeated Sir Charles; "Good Heavens!" continued he, in the sudden agony of his soul, and walking from the couch "is it possible that Amanda was a wanderer in the streets, without food, or a place to lay her head in?—Oh, this is dreadful!—Oh! my friends," he proceeded, looking around him, whilst his eyes beamed the divine compassion of his soul, "be kind, be careful of this poor creature; but it is unnecessary to exhort

you to this, and excuse me for having done so. Yes, I know you will delight in binding up a broken heart, and drying the tears of a wretched outcast. A short time ago, and she appeared,"—he stopped, overcome by his emotions, and turned away his head, to wipe away his tears; "a short time ago," he resumed, "and she appeared all that the heart of man could desire, all that a woman should wish and ought to be; now she is fallen indeed, lost to herself and to the world!" "No," cried Emily, with generous warmth, starting from the side of the couch at which she had been kneeling, "I am confident she never was guilty of an error." "I am inclined, indeed, to be of Emily's opinion," said Mrs. Rushbrook. "I think the monster who spread such a snare for her destruction, traduced Miss Donald, in order to drive her from those who would protect her from his schemes." "Would to Heaven the truth of your conjecture could be proved," exclaimed Sir Charles. —Again he approached the couch: Amanda remained in the same attitude, but seeing her eyes open, he took her cold hand, and in a soothing voice assured her she was safe; but the assurance had no effect upon her; hers, like the dull cold ear of death, was insensible of sound! a faint spark of life seemed only quivering through her woe-worn frame. "She is gone!" cried Sir Charles, pressing her hand between his; "she is gone, indeed! Oh! sweet Amanda, the mortal bounds that enclose thy afflicted spirit will soon be broken." "I trust not, sir," exclaimed Captain Rushbrook; his wife and daughter were not able to speak. "In my opinion she had better be removed to bed."

Amanda was accordingly carried to a chamber, and Sir Charles remained in the drawing room, till Mrs. Rushbrook had returned to it. She informed him Miss Donald continued in the same state. He desired a physician might be sent for, and departed in inexpressible dejection.

CHAPTER XLIX.

Love, gratitude, and pity, wept at once. *Thompson.*

WE shall now account for the incidents in the last chapter. Amanda's letter to the Rushbrooks filled them with surprise and consternation. Mrs. Rushbrook directly repaired to Mrs. Connel, who without hesitation, gave it as her opinion that the whole was a fabrication, invented by malice, to ruin Siphthorpe in their opinion, or else by envy, to prevent their enjoying the good fortune which he offered to their acceptance.—Mrs. Rushbrook was inclined to be of the same opinion; her mind was sensibly affected by the favours Siphthorpe had conferred on her, and yielding to its gratitude, she resolved to be guided implicitly by her friend, who advised her to shew the letter to him. She considered this the best measure she could pursue; if innocent, he would be pleased by the confidence reposed in his honour; if guilty, his confusion must betray him. But Belgrave was guarded against detection; his servant had seen Amanda as she was alighting from the coach the evening she arrived in town. He inquired from the maid concerning her, and learned that she was to lodge in the house, and go by her assumed name. These circumstances he related to his master the moment he returned home, who was transported at the intelligence; from her change of name he supposed her not only in deep distress, but removed from the protection of her friends, and he determined not to lose so favourable an opportunity as the present for securing her in his power. He instantly resolved to relinquish his designs on Emily---designs which her beautiful simplicity and destitute condition had suggested, and to turn all his thoughts on Amanda, who had ever been the first object of his wishes. His pride, as well as love, was interested in again ensnaring her, as he had been deeply mortified by her so successfully baffling

his former stratagems; he knew not of the manner she had left the house.—Half distracted at what he supposed her escape from it, he had followed her to Ireland, and remained incognito near the Convent, till the appearance of Lord Mortimer convinced him any schemes he formed against her must prove abortive; but to concert a plan for securing her, required some deliberation; ere he could devise one, he was summoned to Mrs. Connel's parlour to peruse the letter, and from the hand as well as purport, instantly knew Amanda to be its author. With the daring effrontery of vice, he directly declared she was a discarded mistress of his, who from jealousy, had taken this step to prevent, if possible, his union. He assured them her real name was not Donald, bid them tax her with that deceit, and judge from her confusion whether she was not guilty of that, as well as every thing else he alledged against her. His unembarrassed manner had the appearance of innocence to his too credulous auditors, prejudiced as they were already in his favour, and in their minds he was now fully acquitted of his imputed crimes. He was now careless whether Amanda saw him or not, (for he had before stolen into the house) being well convinced nothing she could alledge against him would be credited. When night approached without bringing her, he grew alarmed lest he had lost her again. At last her return relieved him from this fear. The conversation which passed in the parlour he heard through the means of his servant, who had listened to it. The mention of Amanda's removal in the morning made him immediately consult his servant about measures for securing her, and he, with the assistance of the maid, contrived the scheme which has been already related, having forged a letter in Emily's name. But how inadequate is language to describe the rage that took possession of his soul, when going at the appointed hour to carry Amanda off he found her already gone. He raved, cursed, stamped, and

accused the woman and his servant of being privy to her escape. In vain Mrs. Deborah told him of the trick she had played on her, and how she had been obliged to get into the house through the window. He continued his accusations, which so provoked his servant, conscious of their unjustness, that he at last replied to them with insolence.—This in the present state of Belgrave's mind, was not to be borne, and he immediately struck him over the forehead with his sword, and with a violence which felled him to the earth. Scarcely had he obeyed ere he repeated this impulse of passion, which seemed attended with fatal consequences, for the man gave no symptoms of existence. Consideration for his own safety was more prevalent in his mind than any feelings of humanity, and he instantly rushed from the house, ere the woman was sufficiently recovered from her horror and amazement, to be able to call to the other servants as she afterwards did, to stop him. He fled to town, and hastened to an hotel in Pall Mall, from whence he determined to hire a carriage for Dover, and thence embark for the Continent. Ascending the stairs he met a man, of all others he would have wished to avoid, namely Sir Charles Bingley. He started, but it was too late to retreat. He then endeavoured to shake off his embarrassment, from a faint hope that Sir Charles had not heard of his villainous design upon Miss Rushbrook; but this hope vanished the moment Sir Charles addressed him, who with coldness and contempt, said he would be glad to speak with him for a few minutes: but ere we relate their conversation, it is necessary to relate a few particulars of the Rushbrooks:

Captain Rushbrook, from knowing more of the deceits of mankind than his wife, was less credulous; the more he reflected on the letter, the more he felt doubts obtruding on his mind, and he resolved sooner to forfeit the friendship of Siphthorpe than permit any further intercourse between him and his daughter

till those doubts were removed. He sent his son to Charles's agent, and had the satisfaction of hearing he was then in town, and lodged at an hotel in Pall Mall. He immediately wrote to Sir Charles, and requested to see him whenever he was at leisure; adding, he was well convinced his benevolence would excuse the liberty he had taken, when informed of the purpose for which his visit was requested. Sir Charles was fortunately within, and directly attended little Rushbrook to the prison. The letter had filled him with surprise, and that surprise gave way the moment he entered the wretched apartment of Rushbrook, to the powerful emotions of pity; a scene more distressing he had never seen, or could not have conceived. He saw the emaciated form of the soldier, for such his dress announced him, seated beside a dying fire, his little children surrounding him, whose faded countenances denoted their keen participation of his grief, and the sad partner of his misery bending her eyes upon those children with mingled love and sorrow.

Rushbrook was unable to speak for a few minutes after his entrance. When he recovered his voice, he thanked him for the kind attention he had paid his request, briefly informed him of the motives for that request, and ended by putting Amanda's letter into his hand. Sir Charles perused it with horror and amazement: "Gracious Heaven!" he exclaimed, "what a monster! I know not the lady who has referred you to me, but I can testify to the truth of her allegations. I am shocked to think such a monster as Belgrave exists."

Shocked at the idea of the destruction she was so near devoting her daughter to, disappointed in the hopes she entertained of having her family liberated from prison, and struck with remorse for her conduct to Amanda, Mrs. Rushbrook fell fainting to the floor, overpowered by her painful emotions; Sir Charles aided in raising her from it, for the trembling hand

of Rushbrook refused its assistance. "Unhappy woman!" he exclaimed, "the disappointment of her hopes is too much for her feeble frame." Water, the only restorative in the room, being sprinkled in her face, she slowly revived, and the first object she beheld was the pale and weeping Emily, whom her father had insisted on being brought to the prison. "Oh my child," she cried clasping her to her bosom, "can you forgive the mother who was so near devoting you to destruction? Oh! my children, for your sake, how near was I sacrificing this dear, this precious girl! I blush! I shudder! when I reflect on my conduct to the unhappy young creature, who, like a guardian angel, interposed between my child and ruin; but these dreary walls, she continued, bursting into an agony of tears, "which now we must never hope to pass, will hide my shame and sorrows together!" "Do not despair, my dear madam," said Sir Charles, in the soft accent of benevolence, "nor do you," continued he, turning to Rushbrook, "deem me impertinent in inquiring into those sorrows." His accent, his manner, were so soothing, that these children of misery who had long been strangers to the voice of kindness, gave him, with tears and sighs, a short relation of their sorrows. He heard them with deep attention, and when he departed gave them such a smile as we may suppose would beam from an angel, if sent by Heaven to pour the balm of comfort and mercy over the sorrows of a bursting heart.

He returned early in the morning: how bright, how animating was his countenance! Oh, ye sons of riot and extravagance! ye children of dissipation! never did ye experience a pleasure equal to his, when he entered the apartment of Rushbrook to inform him he was free; when in the impassioned, yet faltering accents of sensibility, he communicated the joyful tidings, and heard the little children repeat his words, while their parents gazed on each other with surprise and rapture.

Rushbrook at length attempted to pour out the fullness of his heart, but Sir Charles stopped him—"Blessed with a fortune," cried he, "beyond my wants, to what nobler purpose could superfluous wealth be devoted, than to the enlargement of a man who has served his country, and who has a family which he may bring up to act as he has done? May the restoration of liberty be productive of every happiness! Your prison gates, I rejoice to repeat, are open; may the friendship which commenced within these walls be lasting as our lives!" To dwell longer on this subject is unnecessary. The transported family were conveyed to Mrs. Connel's, where he had been the preceding night to order everything for their reception.—He then had inquired about Siphthorpe, or rather Belgrave, whom he meant to upbraid for his cruel designs against Miss Rushbrook; but Belgrave, as soon as his plan was settled about Amanda, had quitted Mrs. Connel's. The joy of the Rushbrooks was greatly damped the next morning on hearing of the secret departure of Amanda. What Belgrave had said against her they never would have credited, but for the appearance of mystery which enveloped her; still her amiable attention to them merited their truest gratitude, they wished to have expressed that gratitude to her, and offer her their services. Much as appearances were against Amanda, yet from the very moment Mrs. Rushbrook declared it her idea that Belgrave had traduced her for the purpose of depriving her of protection, a similar idea started in Sir Charles's mind, and he resolved to seek Belgrave, and never rest till he had discovered whether there was any truth in his assertions against Amanda. Their meeting at the hotel was considered as fortunate as unexpected by him; yet could he not disguise for a moment the contempt his character inspired him with. He reproached him as soon as they entered an apartment, for his base designs against Miss Rushbrook; designs in every re-

spect degrading to his character, since he knew the blow he levelled at the peace of her father could not, from the unfortunate situation of that father, be resented.---“You are,” continued Sir Charles, “not only the violator, but the defamer of female innocence: I am well convinced from reflection on past and present circumstances, that your allegations against Miss Fitzalan were as false as vile.” “You may doubt them, Sir Charles,” replied Belgrave, “if it is agreeable to you; but yet as a friend, I advise you not to let every one know you are her champion.” “Oh, Belgrave!” cried Sir Charles, “can you think without remorse, of having destroyed not only the reputation, but the existence of an amiable young creature.” “The existence!” repeated Belgrave, starting, and with a kind of horror in his look, “what do you mean?” “I mean that Amanda Fitzalan, involved, through your means, in a variety of wretchedness she was unable to support, is now on her death-bed!”—Belgrave changed colour, trembled, and in an agitated voice, demanded an explanation of Sir Charles’s words.

Sir Charles saw his feelings were touched, and trusting they would produce the discovery he wished, briefly gave him the particulars he asked for.

Amanda was the only woman that had ever really touched the heart of Belgrave. His mind filled with horror and enervated with fear, at the idea of the crime he had recently committed, could make no opposition to the grief he experienced on hearing of her situation, a grief heightened almost to distraction, by reflecting that he was accessory to it. “Dying!” he repeated, “Amanda Fitzalan dying! but she will be happy; hers will be a pure and ministering spirit in Heaven, when mine lies howling; the angels are not purer in mind and person than she is!” “Then you are an execrable villain,” cried Sir Charles, laying his hand on his sword.

“Strike!” exclaimed Belgrave, with an air of wild-

ness ; " death will rid me of horrors : death from you will be better than the ignominious one which now stares me in the face ; for I have, oh ! horrible, this night I have committed murder ! "

Astonished and dismayed, Sir Charles gazed on him with earnestness.

" It is true ! " continued he, in the same wild manner, " it is true ! therefore strike ! but against you I will not raise my hand, it were impious to touch a life like yours consecrated to the purposes of virtue ; no, I would not deprive the wretched of their friend. "

Sir Charles, still shuddering at his words, demanded an explanation of them ; and the tortured soul of Belgrave, as if happy to meet any one it could confide in, after a little hesitation, divulged at once its crimes and horrors. " No, " cried Sir Charles, when he had concluded, " to raise a hand against him, over whom the arm of justice is uplifted, were cruel as well as cowardly ; go then, and may repentance, not punishment, overtake you. " To describe the raptures Sir Charles experienced at the acquittal of Amanda, is impossible ; not a fond father rejoicing over the restored fame of a darling child could experience more exquisite delight. The next morning as soon as he thought it possible he could gain admittance, he hastened to Mrs. Connel's and had the satisfaction of hearing from Mrs. Rushbrook that Amanda was then in a sweet sleep, from which the most salutary consequences might be expected. With almost trembling impatience he communicated the transports of his heart, and his auditors rejoiced as much at these transports on Amanda's account, as on his. Mrs. Rushbrook and Emily sat up with her the preceding night, which she passed in a most restless manner without any perception of surrounding objects. Towards morning she fell into a profound sleep which they trusted would recruit her exhausted frame. Mrs. Rushbrook then withdrew to her husband. It was past noon ere Amanda awoke. At first a pleasing

langour was diffused through her frame, which prevented her from having an idea of her situation; but gradually her recollection returned, and with it anxiety to know where she was. She remembered to the moment she had met Sir Charles, but no further. She gently opened the curtain, and beheld, oh! how great the pleasure of that moment! Emily, sitting by the bedside, who instantly rising, kissed her cheek in a transport of affection, and inquiring how she did: Oh! how delightful, how soothing was that gentle voice to the ears of Amanda! the softest music could not have been more grateful; her heart vibrated to it with an exquisite degree of pleasure, and her eyes feasted on the rays of benevolence which streamed from those of Emily's.—At last in a faint voice, she said, “I am sure I am safe since I am with Emily.”

Mrs. Rushbrook entered at that instant; her delight at the restored faculties of Amanda was equal to her daughter's, yet the recollection of her own conduct made her almost reluctant to approach her. At last advancing, “I blush, yet I rejoice, oh! how truly rejoice, to behold you,” she exclaimed; “that I could be tempted to harbour a doubt against you, fills me with regret, and the vindication of your innocence can scarcely yield you more pleasure than it yields me.”

“The vindication of my innocence!” repeated Amanda, raising her head from the pillow: “Oh, gracious heaven! is it then vindicated? Tell me, I conjure you, how and by what means.”

Mrs. Rushbrook hastened to obey her, and related all she had heard from Sir Charles. The restoration of her fame seemed to re-animate the soul of Amanda, yet tears burst from her, and she trembled with emotion. Mrs. Rushbrook was alarmed, and endeavoured to compose her.

“Do not be uneasy,” said Amanda, “those tears will never injure me; it is long—it is very long since

I have shed tears of joy!" She implored heaven's choicest blessings on Sir Charles for his generosity to her, his benevolence to the Rushbrooks. Her heart relieved of a heavy burthen of anxiety on her account now grew more anxious than ever to learn something of her poor Oscar; and notwithstanding Mrs. Rushbrook's entreaties to the contrary, who feared she was exerting herself beyond her strength, she arose in the afternoon for the purpose of going to the drawing-room, determined as Sir Charles's generous conduct merited her confidence, to relate to him, as well as to Mrs. Rushbrook, the motives which had brought her to town; the particulars of her life, necessary to be known; and to request their assistance in trying to learn intelligence of her brother: Emily helped her to dress, and supported her to the drawing-room, Sir Charles continued in the house the whole day, and met her as she entered, with mingled love and pity; for in her feeble form, her faded cheeks, he witnessed the ravages of grief and sickness: his eyes more than his tongue expressed his feelings, yet in the softest accent of tenderness did he pour forth those feelings, whilst his hand trembled as it pressed hers to his bosom.

"My feelings, Sir Charles," said she, "cannot be expressed; but my gratitude to you will cease but with my existence."

Sir Charles besought her to be silent on such a subject. He was selfish, he said, in every thing he did for her, for on her happiness his depended."

Rushbrook approached to offer his congratulations. He spoke of her kindness, but like Sir Charles, the subject was painful to her, and dropped at her request. The idea of being safe; the soothing attentions she experienced, gave to her mind a tranquillity it had long been a stranger to, and she looked back on her past dangers but to enjoy more truly her present security; as she witnessed the happiness of the Rushbrooks, she could scarcely forbear applauding

aloud the author of that happiness; but she judged of his heart by her own, and therefore checked herself by believing he would prefer the silent plaudits of that heart to any praise whatsoever. After tea, when only Sir Charles, Mr. and Mrs. Rushbrook, and Emily were present, she entered upon the affairs she wished to communicate. They heard her with deep attention, wonder, and pity, and when she concluded, both Sir Charles and Rushbrook declared their readiness to serve her. The latter, who had betrayed strong emotions during her narrative, assured her, he doubted not, nay, he was almost convinced, he should soon be able to procure her intelligence of her brother.

This was a sweet assurance to the heart of Amanda, and cheered by it, she soon retired to bed. Her strength being exhausted by speaking, she sunk into a tranquil slumber, and next morning she arose for breakfast. "Well," said Rushbrook, to her, as they sat at it, "I told you last night I should soon be able to procure you intelligence of your brother, and I was not mistaken." "Oh, Heavens!" cried Amanda, in trembling emotion, "have you really heard any thing of him?" "Be composed, my dear girl," said he, taking her hand, in the most soothing, most affectionate manner, "I have heard of him, but——"

"But what?" interrupted Amanda, with increased emotion. "Why, that he has experienced some of the trials of life; but let the reflection that these trials are over, prevent your suffering pain by hearing of them." "Oh! tell me, I entreat," said Amanda, "where he is. Tell me, I conjure you, shall I see him?" "Yes," replied Rushbrook, "you shall see him; to keep you no longer in suspense, in that dreary prison from which I have been just released, he has languished for many months." "Oh! my brother," exclaimed Amanda, while tears gushed from her.

"I knew not," continued Rushbrook, "from the concealment of your name, that he was your brother, till last night. I then told Sir Charles, and he is

gone this morning to him ; but you must expect to see him somewhat altered. The restoration of liberty, and the possession of fortune, will no doubt soon re-establish his health. Hark ! I think I hear a voice on the stairs."

Amanda started, arose, attempted to move, but sunk again upon her chair. The door opened, and Sir Charles entered, followed by — Oscar. Though prepared for an alteration in his looks, she was not by any means prepared for an alteration which struck her the moment she beheld him : pale and thin, even to a degree of emaciation ; he was dressed, or rather wrapped in an old regimental great coat, his fine hair wildly dishevelled. As he approached her, Amanda rose.

"Amanda, my sister!" said he, in a faint voice. She tottered forward, and falling upon his bosom, gave way in tears to the mingled joy and anguish of the moment. Oscar pressed her to his heart. He gazed on her with the fondest rapture, yet a rapture suddenly checked, by surveying the alteration in her appearance, which was as striking to him, as his was to her. Her pale and woe-worn countenance, her sable dress, at once declared her sufferings, and brought most painfully to recollection the irreparable loss they had sustained since their last meeting.

"Oh, my father;" groaned Oscar, unable to control the strong emotions of his mind—"Oh, my father! when last we met we were blessed with your presence." He clasped Amanda closer to his heart as he spoke, as if doubly endeared to him by her desolate situation.

"To avoid regretting him is indeed impossible," said Amanda; "yet had he lived, what tortures would have wrung his heart in witnessing the unhappiness of his children, when he had not the power of removing it." "Come," cried Captain Rushbrook, whose eyes, like those of every person present, confessed his sympathetic feelings, "let us not cloud

present blessings by the retrospection of past misfortunes. In this life we must all expect to meet with such losses as you lament." As soon as Oscar and Amanda grew composed, they were left to themselves, and Oscar then satisfied the anxious and impatient heart of his sister, by informing her of all that had befallen him. He began with his attachment for Adela, and the disappointment of that attachment; but as this part of his story is already known, we shall pass it over in silence, and merely relate the occasion of his quarrel with Belgrave.

CHAPTER L.

"But thou, who mindful of the honour'd deed
Dost in these lines their artless tale relate;
If chance by lonely contemplation led,
Some kindred spirit should lament thy fate;

"Haply some hoary headed swain may say,
Oft have I seen him at the peep of dawn,
Brushing with hasty steps the dews away,
To meet the sun upon the upland lawn."

"I LEFT Enniskillen," said Oscar, "in the utmost distress of mind, for I left it with the idea that I might no more behold Adela: yet dear and precious as her sight was to my soul, I rejoiced she had not accompanied the regiment, since to have beheld her but as the wife of Belgrave, would have been insupportable; had the disappointment of my passion been occasioned by its not meeting a return, pride would have assisted me to conquer it; but to know it was tenderly returned, at once cherished, and if possible increased it. The idea of the happiness I might have attained, rendered me insensible of any that I might still have enjoyed. I performed the duties of my situation mechanically, and shunned society as much as possible, unable to bear the raillery of my gay companions on my melancholy.

"The summer you came to Ireland the regiment

removed to Bray, whose romantic situation allowed me to enjoy many delightful and solitary rambles. It was there a man enlisted, whose manner and appearance were for many days subjects of surprise and conversation to us all: from both it was obvious he had been accustomed to one of the superior situations in life. A form more strikingly elegant I never beheld: the officers made many attempts to try and discover who he really was, but he evaded all their inquiries, yet with the utmost agitation. What rendered him, if possible, more interesting, was his being accompanied by a young and lovely woman, who, like him, appeared sunk beneath her original state: but to their present one both conformed, if not with cheerfulness, at least with resignation.

“Mary obtained work from almost all the officers. Henry was diligent in his duties; and both were universally admired and respected. Often in my lonely rambles have I surprised this unfortunate pair, who it was evident, like me, sought solitude for the indulgence of sorrow, weeping together, as if o’er the remembrance of happier hours. Often have I beheld them gazing with mingled agony and tenderness, on the infant which Mary nursed, as if shuddering at the idea of its destiny.

“The loveliness of Mary was too striking not to attract the notice of Belgrave; and from her situation he flattered himself she would be an easy prey: he was however mistaken: she repulsed his overtures with equal abhorrence and indignation. She wished to conceal them from her husband, but he heard of them through the means of his fellow soldiers, who had several times seen the Colonel following his wife. It was then he really felt the bitterness of a servile situation. Of his wife he had no doubt; she had already given him a convincing proof of constancy, but he dreaded the insults she might receive from the Colonel. The united vigilance of both, prevented, however for some time a repetition of those insults.

Exasperated by their vigilance, the Colonel at last concerted one of the most diabolical plans which could have entered into the heart of man. A party of the soldiers were ordered to the sea-side, to watch there for smuggled goods; Henry was named to be of the party, but when the soldiers were drawn out, he was not to be found. Belgrave's servant, the vile agent of his master, had informed him that the Colonel meant to take advantage of his absence, and visit his wife. He trembled for her safety, resolved to run every risk, sooner than leave her unguarded, and accordingly absconded till the departure of the party. The consequence of this was, that on his re-appearance he was put under an arrest for disobedience to orders, tried the next day, and sentenced to be flogged on the following one. The very officers that passed the sentence regretted it; but the strictness of military discipline rendered it unavoidable.

“ I shall not attempt to describe the situation of the unhappy young couple; they felt for each other more than for themselves, and pride heightened the agonies of Henry.

“ Pale, weeping, with a distracted air, Mary flew to my apartment, and sinking at my feet, with uplifted hands besought me to interpose in favour of her husband. I raised the poor mourner from the ground, and assured her, yet with a sigh, from the fear of proving unsuccessful, that I would do all in my power to save him. I therefore hastened to the Colonel to ask for another that favour I should have disdained to desire for myself: but to serve this wretched couple, I felt I could almost humble myself to the earth.

“ The Colonel was on the parade; and as if aware of my intention, appeared sedulous to avoid me. But I would not be repulsed by this, and followed him, entreating his attention for a few minutes.

“ ‘ Dispatch your business then in haste, sir,’ said he, with an unusual haughtiness. ‘ I shall, sir,’ cried I, endeavouring to repress the indignation his man-

ner excited, 'and I also hope with success.' 'What is your business, sir?' demanded he. 'Tis the business of humanity,' I replied, 'and 'tis only for others I could ask a favour.'

"I then proceeded to mention it. Rage and malice inflamed his countenance as I spoke.

"'Never,' exclaimed he, 'shall the wretch receive pardon from me; and I am astonished at your presumption in asking it.' 'Yet not half so astonished,' replied I, 'as I am at your obduracy:—though why do I say so? from your past actions, I should not be surprised at any act you may commit.'

"His passion grew almost to frenzy; he asked me if I knew who I was addressing.

"'Too well,' I replied, 'I know I am addressing one of the completest villains upon earth.'

"He raised a small rattan he held, at these words, in a threatening manner, I could no longer oppose my indignation; I rushed upon him, wrested it from his hand, broke it, and flung it over his head.

"'Now,' cried I, laying my hand upon my sword, 'I am ready to give you the satisfaction you may desire for my words—words, whose truth I will uphold with my life.' 'No,' said he, with the coolness of deliberate malice, 'tis a far different satisfaction I shall expect to receive.'

"Some of the officers had by this time gathered round us, and attempted to interfere; but he commanded their silence in a haughty manner, and ordered me under an immediate arrest.

"My fate I then knew decided; but I resolved to bear that fate with fortitude, nor let him triumph in every respect over me. I was confined to my room, and Henry the next morning was brought forth to receive his punishment. I will not, my sister, pain your gentle heart by describing to you, as it was described to me by an officer, his parting from his wife; pride, indignation, tenderness and pity, were struggling in his heart, and visible in his countenance.

He attempted to assume composure; but when he reached the destined spot, he could no longer control his feelings; the idea of being exposed, disgraced, was too much for his noble soul; the paleness of his face increased, he tottered, fell into the arms of a soldier, and expired, groaning forth the name of Mary.

“Four days after this melancholy event, a court-martial was held on me, when, as I expected, I was broken for contempt to my superior officer. I retired to a solitary inn, near Bray, in a state of mind which baffles description, destitute of friends and fortune. I felt in that moment as if I had no business in the world.

“I was followed to the inn by a young Lieutenant, with whom I had been on an intimate footing. The grief he expressed at my situation, roused me from almost a stupefaction that was stealing on me. The voice of friendship will penetrate the deepest gloom, and I felt my sorrows gradually allayed by it. He asked me, had I fixed on any plan for myself. I replied, ‘I had not, for it was vain to fix on plans when there were no friends to support them.’ He took my hand, and told me I was mistaken; in a few days he trusted to procure me letters to a gentleman in London, who had considerable possessions in the West-Indies, if such a thing was agreeable to me. It was just what I wished for, and I thanked him with the sincerest gratitude.

“In the evening I received a message from the unfortunate Mary, requesting to see me directly; the soldier who brought it said she was dying. I hastened to her; she was in bed, and supported by a soldier’s wife. The declining sun-beams stole into the apartment, and shed a kind of solemn glory round her. The beauty that had caused her misfortunes, was faded, but she looked more interesting than when adorned with that bloom of beauty. Sighs and tears impeded her words for some minutes after I approach-

ed her ; at last, in a faint voice, she said, ‘ I sent for you, sir, because I knew your goodness, your benevolence, would excuse the liberty ; I knew you would think that no trouble which could sooth the last sad moments of a wretched woman.’

“ She then proceeded to inform me of the motives which made her send, namely, to convey her infant to her father, a person of fortune in Dublin, and to see her remains, ere I did so, laid by those of her husband’s. Her unfortunate Henry, she added, had been son to a respectable merchant ; their families were intimate, and an attachment, which commenced at an early period between them, was encouraged. Henry’s father experienced a sudden reverse of fortune, and hers, in consequence of it, forbade their ever thinking more of each other ; but they could not obey his commands, and married clandestinely, thus forfeiting the favour of all their friends, as Henry’s thought he wanted spirit, and hers deemed her deficient in respect to her father, they were therefore compelled by necessity to a state of life infinitely beneath them ; ‘ but in my grave,’ continued she, ‘ I trust my father will bury all his resentment, and protect this little orphan.’

“ I promised a religious observance to her commands, and she expired in about an hour after I quitted her. Mournful were the tasks she enjoined me. I attended her remains to the grave, and then conveyed her child to Dublin.

“ Startled, amazed, distressed, her father too late regretted his rigour, and received her infant to his arms with floods of repentant tears.

“ I now procured my recommendatory letters, and sailed for England, having first written farewell ones to my father and Mrs. Marlowe, in which I informed both I was about quitting the kingdom. As soon as I had procured cheap lodgings in London, I repaired to the gentleman to whom I was recommended ; but conceive my consternation when I heard he was him-

self gone to the West Indies. I turned into a coffee-house, with an intention of communicating this intelligence to my friend. While the waiter was getting me materials for writing, I took up a newspaper, and cast my eyes carelessly over it. Oh! my Amanda, what was the shock of that moment, when I read my father's death! grief for him, anxiety for you, both assailed my heart too powerfully for its feelings; my head grew giddy, my sight failed me, and I fell back with a deep groan. When recovered by the assistance of some gentlemen, I requested a carriage might be sent for, but I was too weak to walk to it. On returning to my lodging, I was compelled to go to bed, from which I never rose for a fortnight. During my illness all the little money I had brought along with me was expended, and I was besides, considerably in debt with the people of the house, for procuring me necessaries. When able to sit up, they furnished their accounts, and I candidly told my inability to discharge them; in consequence of this I was arrested, and suffered but to take of my clothes a change or two of linen. The horrors of what I imagined would be a lasting captivity, were heightened by reflecting on your unprotected situation. A thousand times was I on the point of writing, to inquire into that situation, but still checked myself by reflecting that as I could not aid you, I should only add to any griefs you might be oppressed with, by acquainting you of mine. The company of Captain Rushbrook alleviated in some degree the dreariness of my time. I knew I should sustain an irreparable loss in losing him, but I should have detested myself if any selfish motives had prevented my rejoicing at his enlargement. Oh! little did I think his liberation was leading the way to mine. Early this morning he returned, and introduced Sir Charles Bingley. Gently, and by degrees, they broke the joyful intelligence they had to communicate: with truth I can aver, that the announcement of a splendid fortune was not so

pleasing to my heart, as the mention of my sister's safety. Of my poor Adela, I know nothing since my confinement; but I shudder to think of what she may have suffered from being left solely in the power of such a man as Belgrave, for the good old General died soon after I left Enniskillen."

"'Regret not too bitterly, my dear Oscar,' said Mrs. Marlowe, in one of her letters, 'the good man's death, rather rejoice he was removed, ere his last hours were embittered by the knowledge of his darling child's unhappiness.'

"Oh! my sister," continued Oscar, with a heavy sigh, while tears fell from him, and mingled with those Amanda was shedding, "In this world we must have still something to wish and sigh for."

"Oscar here concluded his narrative, with such an expression of melancholy, as gave to Amanda the sad idea of his passion for Adela being incurable. This was indeed the case; neither reason, time, nor absence could remove or lessen it, and the acquisition of liberty or fortune lost half their value by brooding o'er her loss.

When their friends returned to the drawing-room, and again offered their congratulations; Oscar's dejection would not permit him to reply to them. When Mr. and Mrs. Rushbrook spoke of the happiness he might now enjoy, he listened to their recapitulation of it as to a fulsome tale, to which his heart in secret gave the lie; an innate sense of piety, however, recalled him to a proper recollection of the blessings so unexpectedly declared to be his; he accused himself of ingratitude to heaven in yielding to murmurs after so astonishing a reverse in his situation; perfect happiness he had been early taught, and daily experience confirmed the truth of the remark, was rarely to be met with; how presumptuous in him, therefore to repine at the common lot of humanity: to be independent, to have the means of returning the obligations Sir Charles Bingley had conferred upon him;

to be able to comfort and provide for his lovely and long afflicted sister; and to distribute relief amongst the children of indigence, were all blessings which would shortly be his; blessings which demanded his warmest gratitude, and for which he now raised his heart with thankfulness to their divine dispenser. His feelings grew composed; a kind of soft and serene melancholy stole over his mind; he still thought of Adela, but not with that kind of distracting anguish he had so recently experienced; it was with that kind of tender regret which a soul of sensibility feels when reflecting on a departed friend, and to him Adela was as much lost, as if already shrouded in her native clay. "Yes, my love," he said, as if her gentle spirit had already forsaken its earthly mansion, "in that happy world we shall be re-united, which only could reward thy goodness and thy sufferings."

He could now enter into conversation with his friends about the measures which should be taken to forward his pretensions. It was the opinion of Captain Rushbrook and Sir Charles, that to make known his claim to the Marquis of Rosline, was all that was necessary: a claim which they did not imagine he would or could dispute, when such proofs of its validity as the testimony of Lady Dunreath, and the will could be produced: was it disputed, it was then time enough to apply elsewhere for justice.

Sir Charles knew the Marquis personally, and was also well acquainted in his neighbourhood, and declared he would accompany Oscar to Scotland. Oscar thanked him for his intention: the support of a person so well known, and universally esteemed, he was convinced, would essentially serve him.

Sir Charles said, regimental business required his presence in Ireland, which however would occasion no great delay, as he should have it transacted in a few days; and as his regiment lay near Donaghadee, they could cross over to Port Patrick, and in a few hours after, reach the Marquis of Rosline's Castle.

The day after the next he had fixed for commencing his journey, and he asked Oscar if it would be agreeable and convenient to accompany him then. Oscar instantly assured him it was both.

Amanda's heart fluttered at the idea of a journey to Ireland; it was probable, she thought, that they would take Wales in their way; and her soul seemed already on the wing to accompany them thither, and be left at the cottage of nurse Edwin, from whence she could again wander through the shades of Tudor-Hall, and take a last, a sad farewell of them; for she solemnly determined from the moment she should be apprised of Lord Mortimer's return to England, to visit them no more; in such a farewell she believed she should find a melancholy consolation that would sooth her spirits. She imagined there was no necessity for accompanying her brother into Scotland, and except told there was an absolute one, she determined to decline the journey, if she should be asked to undertake it. To go to the very spot where she would hear particulars of Lord Mortimer's nuptials, she felt would be too much for her fortitude, and might betray to her brother a secret she had resolved carefully to conceal from him, as she well knew the pain he would feel from knowing that the pangs of a hopeless attachment were entailed upon her life, and would defeat whatever flattering hopes he entertained for her. Exclusive of the above-mentioned objections, she could not bear to go to a place where she might perhaps witness the pain which Lord Mortimer must unavoidably feel from having any disgrace befall a family he was so nearly connected with. O how her heart swelled at the idea that ere Oscar reached Scotland, the interest of the Marquis of Rosline and Lord Mortimer would be but one. From her apprehensions of being asked to undertake a journey so truly repugnant to her feeling, she was soon relieved by Oscar's declaring that except she wished it, he would not ask

her to take so fatiguing a one, particularly as her presence he could not think at all necessary.

Sir Charles Bingley assured him it was not; though in a low voice he said to her, it was against his own interest he spoke.

She would have mentioned her wish of going to Wales, had not a certain consciousness checked her; she feared her countenance would betray her motives for such a wish: while she hesitated about mentioning it, Sir Charles Bingley told Captain Rushbrook, that he had applied to a friend of his in power for a place for him, and had been fortunate enough to make application at the very time there was one of tolerable emolument vacant, at—— about seventy miles distant from London, whither it would be necessary he should go as soon as possible. He therefore proposed that he and Mrs. Rushbrook should begin preparations for their journey the ensuing morning, and exert themselves to be able to undertake it in the course of the week.

They were all rapture and gratitude at this intelligence, which opened a prospect of support through their own means, and the bread of independence, however hardly earned, which here was not the case, must ever be sweet to souls of sensibility.

Oscar looked with anxiety at his sister, on the mention of the Rushbrooks, removal from town, as if to say, to whose care then can I entrust you. Mrs. Rushbrook interpreted his look, and instantly requested that Miss Fitzalan might accompany them, declaring her society would render their felicity complete. This was the moment for Amanda to speak; she took courage, and mentioned her earnest wish of visiting her faithful nurse, declaring she could not lose so favourable an opportunity as now offered for the gratification of that wish, by accompanying her brother into Wales. Emily pleaded, but Amanda, though with the utmost gratitude and tenderness, as if to soften her refusal, was steady. Oscar was

pleased with his sister's determination, as he trusted going into what might be called her native air, joined to the tender care of nurse Edwin, would recruit her health.

Sir Charles was in raptures at the idea of having her company so far on their way.

Every thing relative to the proceedings of the whole party was arranged before dinner, at which Sir Charles presided, giving pleasure to all around him, by the ineffable sweetness of his manners. He withdrew at an early hour at night, and his friends soon after retired to their respective chambers. On entering the breakfast room next morning, Amanda found not only her brother and the Rushbrooks, but Sir Charles Bingley there. Immediately after breakfast he drew Oscar aside, and in the most delicate terms insisted on being his banker at present, to which Oscar gratefully consented. As soon as this affair was settled, he put a note into his sister's hands to purchase whatever she should deem necessary, and she went out with the Rushbrooks, who according to Sir Charles's directions, began preparations for their journey this day. After their return, Sir Charles found an opportunity of again making an offer of his hand to Amanda.

The sincere friendship she had conceived for him, made her determine to terminate his suspense on her account. "Was I to accept your generous proposal, Sir Charles," said she, "I should be unworthy of that esteem which it will be my pride to retain and my pleasure to return, because beyond esteem I cannot go myself; it is due to your friendship," said she, after the hesitation of a moment, whilst a rosy blush stole over her lovely face, and as quickly faded from it, "to declare, that ere I saw you, the fate of my heart was decided."

Sir Charles turned pale; he grasped her hands in a kind of silent agony to his bosom, then exclaimed, "I will not, Miss Fitzalan, after your generous confidence, tease you with further importunities."

CHAPTER LI.

—————I solitary court
The inspiring breeze.—————

Thompson

THE ensuing morning, Oscar, Amanda, and Sir Charles began their journey. The Rushbrooks, who regarded Amanda as the cause of their present happiness, took leave of her with a tender sorrow that deeply affected her heart.—The journey to Wales was pleasant and expeditious, the weather being fine, and relays of horses being provided at every stage. On the evening of the third day they arrived about sun-set at the village which lay contiguous to Edwin's abode; from whence, as soon as they had taken some refreshment, Amanda set off, attended by her brother, for the cottage, having ordered her luggage to be brought after her. She would not permit the attendance of Sir Charles, and almost regretted having travelled with him, as she could not help thinking his passion seemed increased by her having done so. "How dearly," cried he, as he handed her down stairs, "shall I pay for a few short hours of pleasure, by the unceasing regret their remembrance will entail upon me."

Amanda withdrew her hand, and bidding him farewell, hurried on. Oscar proceeded no farther than the lane which led to the cottage with his sister. He had no time to answer the interrogations which its inhabitants might deem themselves privileged to make; neither did he wish his present situation to be known to any others than those already acquainted with it: Amanda therefore meant to say she had taken the opportunity of travelling so far with two particular friends who were going to Ireland. Oscar promised to write to her immediately from thence, and from Scotland, as soon as he had seen the Marquis:—He gave her a thousand charges concerning her health, and took a tender farewell. From his too visible

dejection, Amanda rejoiced she had not revealed her own sorrows to him. She trusted it would be in her power, by soothing attentions, by the thousand little nameless offices of friendship, to alleviate his, to pluck the thorn from his heart which rankled within it, was beyond her hopes; in their dispositions, as well as fates, there was too great a similitude to expect this.

Amanda lingered in the walk as he departed; she was now in the very spot that recalled a thousand fond and tender remembrances; it was here she had given a farewell look to Tudor-Hall; it was here her father had taken a last look at the spire of the church where his beloved wife was interred: it was here Lord Mortimer used so often to meet her; her soul sunk in the heaviest sadness; sighs burst from her overcharged heart, and with difficulty she prevented her tears from falling; all around was serene and beautiful, but neither the serenity nor the beauty of the scene could she now enjoy; the plaintive bleating of the cattle that rambled about the adjacent hills, only heightened her melancholy; and the appearance of autumn, which was now far advanced, only made her look back to the happy period when admiring its luxuriance had given her delight; the parting sunbeams yet glittered on the windows of Tudor-Hall; she paused involuntarily to contemplate it; hours could she have continued in the same situation, had not the idea that she might be observed from the cottage made her at last hasten to it.

The door lay open: she entered, and found only the nurse within, employed at knitting.—Her astonishment at the appearance of Amanda is not to be described. She started, screamed, surveyed her a minute, as if doubting the evidence of her eyes, then running to her, flung her arms about her neck, and clasped her to her bosom.

“Good gracious!” cried she, “well, to be sure, whoever would have thought such a thing! well, to

pe sure, you are as welcome as the flowers in May. Here we have been in such a peck of troubles about you, many and many a time has my good man said, that if he knew where you were he would go to you." Amanda returned the embraces of her faithful nurse, and they both sat down together.

"Ah! I fear," said the nurse, looking tenderly at her for a few minutes, "you have been in a sad way since I last saw you. The poor tear Captain, alack, little did I think when he took you away from us I should never see him more." Amanda's tears could no longer be suppressed, they gushed in torrents from her, and deep sobs spoke the bitterness of her feelings.

"Aye," said the nurse, wiping her eyes with the corner of her apron, "gentle or simple, sooner or later, we must all go the same way; so, my tear child don't take it so much to heart. Well, to pe sure, long pefore this I thought I should have seen or heard of your being greatly married; put I pelieve it is true enough, that men are like the wind, always changing. Any one that had seen Lord Mortimer after you went away would never have thought he could prove fickle; he was in such grief my very heart and soul pitied him; to pe sure, if I had known where you were I should have told him: I comforted myself, however, by thinking he would certainly find you out, when, Lort! instead of looking for you, here he's going to be married to a great Lady, with such a long hard name, -- a Scotch heiress I think they call her; aye, golt is every thing in these days. Well, all the harm I wish him is, that she may plague his life out."

This discourse was too painful to Amanda; her tears had subsided, and she endeavoured to change it, by asking after the nurse's family. The nurse in a hasty manner, said they were well, and thus proceeded: "Then there is parson Howel, I am sure one would have thought him as steady as Penmaenmawr, but no such thing: I am sure he has changed,

for he does not come to the cottage half so often to ask about you as he used to do."

Amanda, notwithstanding her dejection, smiled at the nurse's anger about the curate, and again requested to hear particulars of her family. The nurse no longer hesitated to comply with her request, she informed her they were all well, and then at a little distance at the mill in the valley.—She also added, that Ellen was married to her faithful Chip, had a comfortable cottage, and a fine little girl she was nursing, and to whom, from her love to her tear young lady, she would have given the name of Amanda, but that she feared people would deem her conceited, to give it so fine a one. The nurse, said she, often regretted having left her young lady, and then even Chip himself could not console her for having done so. Tears again started to Amanda's eyes, at hearing of the unabated attachment of her poor Ellen; she longed to see, and congratulate her on her present happiness. The nurse in her turn, inquired of all that had befallen Amanda since their separation, and shed tears at hearing of her dear child's sufferings since that period. She asked about Oscar, and was briefly informed he was well. The family soon returned from the dance; and it would be difficult to say whether surprise or joy was most predominant at seeing Amanda. One of the young men ran over for Ellen, and returned in a few minutes with her, followed by her husband carrying his little child. She looked wild with delight. She clasped Amanda in her arms, as if she would never let her depart from them, and wept in the fulness of her heart. "Now, now," cried she, "I shall be quite happy; but, oh! why, my dear young lady, did you not come amongst us before? you know all in our power we would have done to render you happy." She now recollected herself and modestly retired to a little distance. She took her child, and brought it to Amanda, who delighted her extremely by the notice she took of it and Chip. If

Amanda had had less cause for grief, the attentions of these affectionate cottagers would have soothed her mind; but at present nothing could diminish her dejection. Her luggage was by this time arrived; she had brought presents for all the family, and now distributed them. She tried to converse about their domestic affairs, but found herself unequal to the effort, and begged to be shewn to her chamber. The nurse would not suffer her to retire to it till she had tasted her new cheese and Welch ale. When alone within it, she found fresh objects to remind her of Lord Mortimer, and consequently to augment her grief; here lay the book-case he had sent her. She opened it with trembling impatience; but scarcely a volume did she examine, in which select passages were not marked by his hand for her particular perusal. Oh! what mementoes were those volumes of the happy hours she had passed at the cottage! the night waned away, and still she continued weeping over them. She could with difficulty bring herself to close the book-case; and when she retired to rest her slumbers were short and refreshing. The next morning as she sat at breakfast, assiduously attended by the nurse and her daughters, (for Ellen had come over early to inquire after her health,) Howel entered to pay her a visit; the previous intimation she had received of the alteration in his sentiments, rendered his visit more pleasing than it would otherwise have been to her; his pleasure was great at seeing her, but it was not the wild and extravagant delight of a lover, but the soft and placid joy of a friend. After his departure, which was not soon, she accompanied Ellen to view her cottage, and was infinitely pleased by its neatness and romantic situation; it lay on the side of a hill which commanded a beautiful prospect of Tudor-Hall! every thing she beheld reminded Amanda of Lord Mortimer, even the balmy air she breathed, on which his voice had so often floated.

The sad indulgence of wandering through the shades of Tudor-Hall, which she had so eagerly desired, and fondly anticipated, she could not long deny herself. The second evening after her arrival at the cottage, she turned her solitary steps to them, their deep embowering glens, their solitude, their silence, suited the pensive turn of her feelings: here, undisturbed and unobserved, she could indulge the sorrows of her heart; and oh! how did recollection augment those sorrows by retracing the happy hours she had spent within those shades. A cold, a death-like melancholy pervaded her feelings, and seemed repelling the movements of life! her trembling limbs were unable to support her, and she threw herself on the ground. For some minutes she could scarcely breathe; tears at length relieved her painful oppression, she raised her languid head, she looked around, and wept with increasing violence at beholding what might be termed mementoes of former happiness. She repeated in soft and tremulous accents, the name of Mortimer; but as the beloved name vibrated on her ear, how did she start at recollecting that she was then calling upon the husband of Lady Euphrasia! She felt a momentary glow upon her cheeks; she arose, and sighed deeply. "I will strive to do right," she cried; "I will try to wean my soul from remembrances no longer proper to be indulged." Yet still she lingered in the wood; the increasing gloom of evening rendered it, if possible, more pleasing to her feelings, whilst the breeze sighed mournfully through the trees, and the droning bat fluttered upon the air, upon which the wild music of a harp, from one of the neighbouring cottages, softly floated.

Amanda drew nearer to it; it looked dark and melancholy; she sighed; she involuntarily exclaimed, "Oh, how soon will it be enlivened by bridal pomp and festivity!"

She now recollected the uneasiness her long absence might create at the cottage; and as soon as the idea

occurred, hastened to it. She met Edwin in the lane, who had been dispatched by his wife in quest of her. The good woman expressed her fears, that such late rambles would injure the health of Amanda; it was a sad thing, she said, to see young people giving way to dismal fancies.

Amanda did not confine her rambles entirely to Tudor-Hall; she visited all the spots where she and Mortimer used to ramble together. She went to the humble spot where her mother lay interred. Her feelings were now infinitely more painful than when she had first seen it; it recalled to her mind, in the most agonizing manner, all the vicissitudes she had experienced since that period; it recalled to view the calamitous closure of her father's life—the sorrows, the distresses of that life, and she felt overwhelmed with grief: scarcely could she prevent herself from falling on the grave, and giving way in tears and lamentations to that grief. Deprived of the dearest connections of life, blasted in hopes and expectations, "Oh! well had it been for me," she cried, "had this spot at once received the mother and child; and yet," she exclaimed, after a minute's reflection; "oh! what, my God, am I, that I should dare to murmur or repine at thy decrees? oh! pardon the involuntary expressions of a woe-worn heart, of a heart that feels the purest gratitude for thy protection through past dangers. Oh! how presumptuous," she continued, "to repine at the common lot of humanity, as the lot of her," she continued, casting her tearful eyes upon the grave, where the last flowers of autumn were now withering, "who reposes in this earthly bed; who in life's meridian, in beauty's prime, sunk, the sad victim of sorrow, into the arms of death! Oh, my parents, how calamitous were your destinies! even your ashes were not permitted to moulder together; but, in a happier region, your kindred spirits are now united.

"Blessed spirits, your child will strive to imitate your

example ; in patient resignation to the will of Heaven, she will endeavour to support life ; she will strive to live, though not from an idea of enjoying happiness, but from an humble hope of being able to dispense it to others."

Such were the words of Amanda at the grave of her mother, from which she turned like a pale and drooping lily, surcharged with tears.

At the end of a week, she heard from Oscar, who told her in the course of a few days he expected to embark for Scotland. Amanda had brought materials for drawing, with her, and she felt a passionate desire of taking views of Tudor-Hall ; views, she believed would yield her a melancholy pleasure when she should be far, and for ever distant from the spots they represented.

This desire however she could not gratify, without the assistance of her nurse, for she meant to take her views from the library, and she feared if she went there without apprising the housekeeper, she should be liable to interruption. She therefore requested her nurse to ask permission for her to go there. The nurse shook her head, as if she suspected Amanda had a motive for the request she did not divulge. She was however too anxious to gratify her dear child, to refuse complying with it, and accordingly lost no time in asking the desired permission, which Mrs. Abergwilly readily gave, saying, "Miss Fitzalan was welcome to go to the library whenever she pleased, and should not be interrupted."

Amanda did not delay availing herself of this permission, but it was some time after she entered the library, ere she could compose herself sufficiently for the purpose which had brought her to it. In vain did nature appear from the windows, displaying the most beautiful and romantic scenery to her view, as if to tempt her to take up the pencil. Her eyes were dimmed with tears as she looked upon this scenery and reflected, that he who had once pointed out its

various beauties, was lost to her for ever. By degrees, however, her feelings grew composed, and every morning she repaired to the library, feeling, whilst engaged within it, a temporary alleviation of sorrow.

Three weeks past in this manner, and at the expiration of that period, she received a letter from Oscar. She trembled in the most violent agitation, as she broke the seal, for she saw by the post-mark he was in Scotland; but how great was her surprise and joy at the contents of this letter, which informed her every thing relative to the important affair so lately in agitation, was settled in the most amicable manner, that the avowal of his claim occasioned not the smallest litigation; that he was then in full possession of the fortune bequeathed him by the Earl, and had already received the congratulations of the neighbouring families on his accession, or rather restoration to it. He had not time, he said, to enumerate the many particulars which rendered the adjustment of affairs so easy, and hoped the pleasing intelligence his letter communicated, would atone for his brevity; he added, he was then preparing to set off for London, with Sir Charles Bingley, of whose friendship he spoke in the highest terms, to settle some affairs relative to his new possessions, and particularly about the revival of the Dunreath title, which, not from any ostentatious pride, he desired to obtain, as he was sure she would suppose, but from gratitude and respect to the wishes of his grandfather, who in his will had expressed his desire, that the honours of his family should be supported by his heir. When every thing was finally settled, he proceeded to say, he would hasten on the wings of love and impatience to her, for in her sweet society alone, he found any balm for the sorrows of his heart, sorrows which could not be eradicated from it, though fortune had been so unexpectedly propitious; and he hoped, he said, he should find her then, gay as the birds, blooming as the flowerets of spring, and ready to

accompany him to the venerable mansion of their ancestors.

The joyful intelligence this letter communicated, she had not spirits at present to mention to the inhabitants of the cottage; the pleasure it afforded was only damped by reflecting on what Lord Mortimer must feel from a discovery which could not fail of casting a dark shade of obloquy upon his new connexions. She was now doubly anxious to finish her landscapes, from the prospect there was of her quitting Wales so soon. Every visit she now paid the library, was paid with the sad idea of its being the last. As she was preparing for going there one morning, immediately after breakfast, the nurse, who had been out some time previous to her rising, entered the room with a look of breathless impatience, which seemed to declare she had something wonderful to communicate.—“Good lack-a-taisy,” cried she, as soon as she had recovered her breath, lifting up her head from the back of the chair on which she had thrown herself. “goot lack-a-taisy, well, to pe sure there is nothing but wonderful things happening in this world! Here, old Dame Abergwilly sent in such a hurry for me this morning; to pe sure, I was surprised, but what was that to the surprise I felt, when I heard what she had sent to me for?” It was now Amanda’s turn to feel breathless impatience: “Good Heavens!” she exclaimed, “what did she tell you?” “Aye, I knew,” cried the nurse, “the commotion you would be in when I told you the news; if you were guessing from this time till this time to-morrow, you would never stumble over what it is.” “I dare say I should not,” cried Amanda, “so do be brief.” “Why, you must know,—put, Lort, my tear child, I am afraid you made but a bad breakfast, for you look very pale; inteed I made no great one myself, for I was in such a hurry flurry with what Mrs. Abergwilly told me, that though she made some nice green tea, and we had a slim cake, I could

scarcely touch any thing." "Well," said Amanda, tortured with anxiety and impatience, "what did she tell you?" "Why, my tear child, down came a special messenger from London, last night, to let them know that Lord Cherbury was dead, and that Lord Mortimer had sold Tudor-Hall; and the steward is ordered to pay all the servants off, and to discharge them; and to have every thing in readiness against the new landlord comes down to take possession.—Oh! Lord, there is such weeping and wailing at the Hall, the poor creatures who had grown old in the service, hoped to have finished their days in it; it is not that they are in any fear of want, the young Lord has taken care of that, for he has settled something yearly upon them all, but that they are sorry to quit the family. Poor Mrs. Abergwilly, nothing can comfort the old soul; she has neither chick nor child, and she told me she loved the very chairs and tables; to which to be sure her hand has given many a polishing rub. She says she thinks she will come and lodge with me; but if she does, she says I must not put her into a room from whence she can have a view of Tudor-Hall; for she says she will never be able to look at it, when once it gets a new master.—So this, my tear child, is the sum totum of what I have heard."

Amanda was equally astonished and affected by what she heard. She wished to know if the nurse had received any intelligence of Lord Mortimer's marriage, but she could not bring herself to ask the question; besides, upon reflection, she was convinced she should have heard if it had been the case. With Lord Cherbury died all hopes of the restoration of her fame in the opinion of his son: "Yet why," she asked herself, "should I regret this, since thus separated, it is better perhaps, he had ceased to esteem me, as undoubtedly it must lessen his feelings on my account?" Why he should part with Tudor-Hall, she could not conceive, except it was to

humour some caprice of Lady Euphrasia's who it was probable (she imagined) knew that the attachment between Lord Mortimer and her had there commenced. "Ah!" cried Amanda, "she never could have relished its beauties—beauties, which if Lord Mortimer thinks as I do, would, if reviewed, only have augmented his sorrows—sorrows which propriety now demands his repelling." She hastened to the hall, but was some time there ere she could commence her employment, so much had she been agitated. The landscape she was finishing, was taken from the little valley which lay beneath the windows of the music-room; the romantic ruins of an old castle overhung an eminence at its extremity; and of the whole scene she had taken a most accurate copy; it wanted but one charm to please her, and that charm was the figure of Lord Mortimer, with whom she had often wandered round the ruins. Her hand was ready in obeying the impulse of her heart, and she soon beheld, sketched in the most striking manner, the elegant features of him so ardently beloved. She gazed with rapture upon them, but it was a short-lived rapture. She started, as if conscious she had committed a crime, when she reflected on the situation in which he now stood with another woman; her trembling hand hastened to atone for its error, by expunging the dangerous likeness, and the warm involuntary tear she shed at the moment, aided her design. "Oh! how unnecessary," she cried, as she made this sacrifice to delicacy, "to sketch features which are indelibly engraven on my heart." As she spoke a deep and long drawn sigh reached her ear; alarmed, confounded at the idea of being overheard, and of course the feelings of her heart discovered, she started with precipitation from her seat, and looked around her with a kind of wild confusion; but, gracious Heaven! who can describe the emotions of her soul when the original of that picture, so fondly sketched, so hastily obliterated,

met her eye ! Amazed, unable to speak, to move, almost to breathe, she stood motionless and aghast, the pale Statue Surprise, as if she neither durst or could believe the evidence of her eyes. Well, indeed, might she have doubted them, for in the pale countenance of Lord Mortimer scarce a vestige of his former self (except in the benignancy of his looks) remained. His faded complexion, the disorder of his hair, his mourning habit, all heightened the sad expression of his features, an expression which declared that he and happiness were never so disunited as at the present moment. The first violence of Amanda's feelings in a little time abated ; she somewhat recovered the use of her faculties, and hastily snatching up her drawings, moved with weak and trembling steps to the door. She had nearly reached it when the soft, the tremulous voice of Lord Mortimer arrested her course. "You go then, Fitzalan," cried he, "without one adieu ; you go, and we never more shall meet." The agonizing manner in which these words were pronounced, struck a death-like chill upon the heart of Amanda. She stopped, and turned round involuntarily, as if to receive that last, that sad adieu, which she was half-reproached for avoiding. Lord Mortimer approached her, he attempted to speak, but his voice was inarticulate ; a gust of sorrow burst from his eyes, and he hastily covered his face with a handkerchief, and walked to a window.

Amanda, unutterably affected, was unable to stand, she sunk upon a chair, and watched with a bursting heart the emotions of Lord Mortimer.— Oh ! with what difficulty at this moment did she confine herself within the cold, the rigid rules of propriety, with what difficulty did she prevent herself from flying to Lord Mortimer ;— from mingling tears with his, and lamenting the cruel destiny which had disunited them for ever. Lord Mortimer in a few minutes was sufficiently recovered again to approach her. "I have

long wished for an opportunity of seeing you," said he, "but I had not courage to desire an interview. How little did I imagine this morning, when, like a sad exile, I came to take a last farewell of a favourite residence, that I should behold you! Fate, in granting this interview, has for once befriended me. To express my horror—my remorse—my anguish—not only for the error a combination of events led me into concerning you, but for the conduct that error influenced me to adopt, will, I think, a little lighten my heart; to receive your pardon will be a sweet, a sad consolation; yet," continued he, after a moment's pause, "why do I say it will be a consolation? Alas! the sweetness that may lead you to accord it, will only heighten my wretchedness at our eternal separation." Here he paused. Amanda was unable to speak. His words seemed to imply, he was acquainted with the injuries she had sustained through his father's means, and she waited in trembling expectation for an explanation of them. "The purity of your character," exclaimed Lord Mortimer, "was at length fully revealed to me. Good Heaven! under what afflicting circumstances? by that Being, to whom you so generously made a sacrifice of what then you might have considered your happiness." "Did Lord Cherbury then," said Amanda, with inexpressible eagerness, "did he then (at last) justify me?" "Yes," cried Lord Mortimer, "he proved you were indeed the most excellent, the most injured of human beings; that you were all which my fond heart had once believed you to be; but, oh! what were the dreadful emotions of that heart to know his justification came too late to restore its peace? Once there was a happy period, when, after a similar error being removed, I had hoped, by a life for ever devoted to you, to have made some reparation, some atonement, for my involuntary injustice; but, alas! no reparation, no atonement can now be made."

Amanda wept: she raised her streaming eyes to Heaven, and again cast them to the earth.

"You weep," cried Lord Mortimer, in a tone expressive of surprise, after surveying her some minutes in silence; "my love, my Amanda," continued he, suddenly seizing her hand, while he surveyed her with a most rapturous fondness, a crimson glow mantling his cheek, and a beam of wonted brilliancy darting from his eye; "What am I to imagine from those tears? are you then, indeed, unaltered?"

Amanda started; she feared the emotions she betrayed had convinced Lord Mortimer of the continuance, the unabated strength of her affection; she felt shocked at her imprudence, which had alone, she was convinced, tempted Lord Mortimer to address her in such a manner. "I know not, my Lord," cried she, "in what sense you ask whether I am unchanged; but of this be assured, a total alteration must have taken place in my sentiments, if I could remain a moment longer with a person who seems at once forgetful of what is due to his own situation and mine." "Go, then, Madam," exclaimed Lord Mortimer, in an accent of displeasure, "and pardon my having thus detained you,—pardon my involuntary offence,—excuse my having disturbed your retirement, and obtruded my sorrows on you."

Amanda had now reached the door; her heart recoiled at the idea of parting in such a manner from Lord Mortimer, but prudence bid her hasten as fast as possible from him; yet slow and lingering she pursued her way; ere she had gone many yards she was overtaken by Lord Mortimer; his pride was inferior to his tenderness, which drove him to despair at the idea of his parting in displeasure from her. "Oh! my Amanda," cried he, seizing her hand, and almost breathless with emotion, "add not, by your anger, to the bitterness of this sad hour; since we must part, oh! let us part in amity, as friends that regard each other. You have not yet (if indeed it is possible for you to do so) pronounced your forgiveness of the persecutions you underwent on my ac-

count ; you have not yet granted your pardon for the harshness, the cruelty with which a dreadful error tempted me to treat you." "Oh ! my Lord," said Amanda, again yielding to the softness of her soul, while tears trickled down her cheeks, "why torture me by speaking in this manner ? How can I pronounce forgiveness when I never was offended ? When wretched and deserted, I appeared to stand upon the great theatre of life, without one hand to offer me assistance, your ready friendship came to my relief, and poured the balm of comfort over the sorrows of my heart ! when deprived by deceit and cruelty of your good opinion, even then your attention and solicitude pursued my wandering footsteps, and strove to mark a path of comfort for me to take ! these, these are the obligations that never can be forgotten, that demand, that possess my eternal gratitude, my ——." A warmer expression rose to her lips, but was again buried in her heart. She sighed, and after a pause of a minute, thus went on :—"For your happiness, my warmest, purest prayers are daily offered up ; oh ! may it yet be equal to your virtues, greater I cannot wish it."

Lord Mortimer groaned in the excruciating agony of his soul. "Oh ! Amanda," he said, "where, where can I receive consolation for your loss ? Never, never in this world !" He took her hands within his, he raised them to Heaven, as if supplicating its choicest blessings on her head ; "for my happiness you pray," he exclaimed,— "ah ! my love, how unavailing is the prayer !"

Amanda now saw more than ever the necessity of hastening away. She gently withdrew her hands, and hurried on as fast as her trembling limbs could carry her. Still Lord Mortimer attended her : "Yet Amanda," cried he, "a little moment. Tell me," he continued, again seizing her hand, "Do not these shades remind you of departed hours ? Oh ! what blissful ones have we not passed beneath their foliage."

age, that foliage which I shall never more behold expanding to the breath of spring."

Amanda trembled; this involuntary, but sad declaration of the loss of a seat so valued by him, overpowered her; her respiration grew faint, she could not support herself, and made a motion to sit down upon the grass, but Lord Mortimer eagerly caught her to his bosom. She had not strength to resist the effort, and her head reclined upon his shoulder; but who can speak her feelings, as she felt the beating heart of Mortimer, which from its violent palpitations, seemed as if it would burst his bosom to find a passage to her feet. — In a few minutes she was a little recovered, and sensible of the impropriety of her situation, was now resolutely determined to quit Lord Mortimer. "We must part my Lord," cried she, disengaging herself from his arms, notwithstanding a gentle effort he made to retain her; "we must part, my Lord," she repeated, "and part for ever." "Tell me, then," he exclaimed, still impeding her course, "tell me whether I may hope to live in your remembrance; whether I may hope not to be obliterated from your memory by the happiness which will shortly surround you; promise I shall at times be thought of with your wonted, though, alas! unavailing wishes for my happiness and the promise will perhaps afford me consolation in the solitary exile I have doomed myself to." "Oh! my Lord," said Amanda, unable to repress her feelings, "why do I hear you speak in this manner? In mentioning exile, do you not declare your intentions of leaving unfulfilled the claims which situation, family, and society have upon you? Oh! my Lord, you shock, shall I say more, you disappoint me! Yes, I repeated it, disappoint the idea I had formed of the virtue and fortitude of him, who, as a friend, I shall ever regard; to yield thus to sorrow, to neglect the incumbent duties of life, to abandon a woman to whom so lately you plighted your solemn vows of love and

protection; Oh! my Lord, what will her friends, what will Lady Euphrasia herself say to such cruel, such unjustifiable conduct?" "Lady Euphrasia!" repeated Lord Mortimer, recoiling a few paces, "Lady Euphrasia!" he again exclaimed, in tremulous accents, regarding Amanda with an expression of mingled horror and wildness, "Gracious Heaven! is it, can it be possible you are ignorant of the circumstances which lately happened? Yes, your words, your looks, declare you are so."

It was now Amanda's turn to repeat his words. She demanded, with a wildness of countenance equal to that he had just displayed, what were the circumstances he alluded to?

"First tell me," cried he, "was the alteration in your manner produced by your supposing me the husband of Euphrasia?" "Supposing you her husband?" repeated Amanda unable to answer his question, in a moment of such torturing suspense: "And are you not so?" "No," replied Lord Mortimer, "I never had the misfortune to offer vows which my heart could not ratify. Lady Euphrasia made another choice. She was your enemy, but I know your gentle spirit will mourn her sad and sudden fate." He ceased, for Amanda had no longer power to listen; she sunk, beneath surprise and joy, into the expanded arms of her beloved Mortimer. It is ye alone, who, like her, have stood upon the very brink of despair—who, like her, have been restored, unexpectedly restored to hope, to happiness, that can form any judgment of her feelings at the present moment, at the moment when recovering from her insensibility, the soft accent of Lord Mortimer saluted her ear, and made her heart, without one censure from propriety, respond to rapture, as he held her to his bosom: as he gazed on her with tears of impassioned tenderness, he repeated his question, whether the alteration in her manner was produced alone by the supposition of his marriage; but he re-

peated it with a sweet, a happy consciousness of having it answered according to his wishes.

“These tears, these emotions, oh! Mortimer, what do they declare?” exclaimed Amanda, “Ah! do they not say my heart never knew a diminution of tenderness, that it never could have forgotten you. Yes,” she continued, raising her eyes, streaming with tears of rapture, to Heaven, “I am now recompensed for all my sufferings: yes, in this blissful moment I meet a full reward for them.” Lord Mortimer now led her back to the library, to give an explanation of the events which had produced so great a reverse of situation; but it was long ere he could sufficiently compose himself to commence his narrative; alternately he fell at the feet of Amanda, alternately he folded her to his bosom, and asked his heart if its present happiness was real. A thousand times he questioned her whether she was indeed unaltered, as often implored her forgiveness for one moment doubting her constancy. Amanda exerted her spirits to calm her own agitation, that she might be enabled to sooth him into tranquillity. At length she succeeded, and he terminated her anxious impatience by giving her the promised relation.

CHAPTER LII.

“By suffering well, our torture we subdue,
Fly when she frowns, and when she calls pursue.”

OVERWHELMED with grief and disappointment at the supposed perfidy of Amanda, Lord Mortimer had returned to England, acquainting Lord Cherbury, and Lady Martha, of the unhappy cause of his returning alone; entreating them, in pity to his wounded feelings, never to mention the distressing subject before him. His dejection was unconquerable; all his schemes of felicity were overthrown, and the destruction of his hopes was the destruction of his peace.

It was not in these first transports of bitter sorrow that Lord Cherbury ventured to speak his wishes to his son: he waited till by slow degrees he saw a greater degree of composure in his manner, though it was a composure attended with no abatement of melancholy. At first he only hinted those wishes; hints, however, which Lord Mortimer appeared designedly insensible of. At last the Earl spoke plainer: he mentioned his deep regret at beholding a son whom he had ever considered the pride of his house and the solace of his days, wasting his youth in wretchedness for an ungrateful woman, who had long triumphed in the infatuation which bound him to her; it filled his soul with anguish, he said, to behold him lost to himself, his family, and the world, thus disappointing all the hopes and expectations which the fair promise of his early youth had given rise to, in the bosoms of his friends, concerning the meridian of his day.

Lord Mortimer was unutterably affected by what his father said. The Earl beheld his emotion, and blest it as a happy omen. His pride, as well as sensibility, he continued, were deeply wounded at the idea of having Lord Mortimer still considered the slave of a passion which had met so base a return. Oh! let not the world, added he, with increasing energy, triumph in your weakness; try to shake it off, ere the finger of scorn and ridicule is pointed at you, as the dupe of a deceitful woman's art.

Lord Mortimer was inexpressible shocked; his pride had frequently represented as weakness the regret he felt for Amanda; and the Earl now stimulating that pride, he felt at the moment as if he could make any sacrifice which should prove his having triumphed over his unfortunate attachment; but when his father called upon him to make such a sacrifice, by uniting himself to Lady Euphrasia, he shrunk back, and acknowledged he could not give so fatal a proof of fortitude. He declared his total repugnance

at present to any alliance; time, and the efforts of reason, he trusted, would subdue his ill-placed attachment, and enable him to comply with the wishes of his friends.

Lord Cherbury would not, could not drop the subject next his heart, a subject so important, so infinitely interesting to him; he exerted all his eloquence; he entreated, he implored his son, not for ever to disappoint his wishes: he mentioned the compliance he had so recently shewn to his, though against his better judgment, in the useless consent he had given to his marriage with Miss Fitzalan.

Lord Mortimer, persecuted by his arguments, at length declared that, was the object he pointed out for his alliance, any other than Lady Euphrasia Sutherland, he would not perhaps be so reluctant to comply with his wishes; but she was a woman he could never esteem, and must consequently for ever refuse; she had given such specimens of cruelty and deceit, in the schemes she had entered into with the Marchioness, against (he blushed, he faltered, as he pronounced her name) Miss Fitzalan, that his heart felt unutterable dislike to her.

The Earl was prepared for this; he had the barbarity to declare, in the most unhesitating manner, he was sorry still to find him blinded by the art of that wretched girl; he bid him reflect on her conduct, and then consider whether any credence was to be given to her declaration of Belgrave's being admitted to the house without her knowledge.

Lord Mortimer was startled; her conduct indeed, as his father said, might well make him doubt her veracity. But still the evidence of the servants; they acknowledged having been instruments in forwarding the scheme which she said was laid against her. He mentioned this circumstance; the Earl was also prepared for it; the servants, he declared, had been examined in his presence, when with shame and contrition they confessed, that seeing the strong

anxiety of Lord Mortimer for the restoration of Miss Fitzalan's fame, and tempted by the large bribes he offered, if they could or would say any thing in her justification, they had at last made the allegation so pleasing to him.

Lord Mortimer sighed deeply; 'on every side,' cried he, 'I find I have been the dupe of art, but it was only the deceit of one, could agonize my soul.' Still however, he was inexorable to all his father could say relative to Lady Euphrasia.

Lady Martha was at last called in as an auxiliary; she was now as strenuous for the connexion as ever Lord Cherbury had been; a longer indulgence of Lord Mortimer's grief, she feared, would completely undermine his health, and either render him a burden to himself, or precipitate him to an early grave. Whilst he continued single, she knew he would not consider any vigorous exertions for overcoming that grief necessary, but if once united, she was convinced, from the rectitude and sensibility of his disposition, he would struggle against his feelings, in order to fulfil the incumbent duties he had imposed upon himself. Thus did she deem an union requisite, to rouse him to exertion; to restore his peace, and in all probability to save his life. She joined in her brother's arguments and entreaties, with tears she joined in them, and besought Mortimer to accede to their wishes; she called him the last hope of their house: he had long, she said, been the pride, the delight of their days; their comfort, their existence were interwoven in his; if he sunk, they sunk with him.

The yielding soul of Mortimer could not resist such tenderness, and he gave a promise of acting as they wished. He imagined he could not be more wretched; but scarcely had this promise past his lips, ere he felt an augmentation of misery. To enter into new engagements, to resign the sweet, though melancholy privilege of indulging his feelings, to fetter at once both soul and body, were ideas that filled

him with unutterable anguish. A thousand times was he on the point of retracting his regretted and reluctant promise, had not honour interposed, and showed the inability of doing so, without an infringement on its principles. Thus entangled, Mortimer endeavoured to collect his scattered thoughts, and in order to try and gain some composure, he altered his former plan of acting, and mingled as much as possible in society; he strove to fly from himself, that by so doing he might fly from the corrosive remembrances which embittered his life. But who shall paint his agonies at the unexpected sight of Amanda, at the Macqueen's! The exertions he had for some time before compelled himself to make, had a little abated the pain of his feelings, but that pain returned with redoubled violence at her presence, and every idea of present composure, or future tranquillity, vanished. He felt with regret, with anguish, that she was as dear as ever to his soul, and his destined union became more hateful than ever to him. He tried, by recollecting her conduct, to awaken his resentment, but, alas! softness, in spite of all his efforts to the contrary, was the predominant feeling of his soul. Her pallid cheek, her deep dejection, seemed to say she was the child of sorrow and repentance. To sooth that sorrow, to strengthen that repentance, oh! how delightful unto him, but either he durst not do, situated as he then was.

With the utmost difficulty Lady Martha Dormer prevailed on him to be present when she demanded the picture from Amanda. That scene has already been described; also his parting one with her; but to describe the anguish he endured after this period is impossible. He beheld Lady Euphrasia with a degree of horror; his faltering voice refused even to pay her the accustomed compliments of meeting; he loathed the society he met at the castle, and regardless of what would be thought of him; regardless of health, or the bleakness of the season, wandered, for

hours together, in the most unfrequented parts of the domain, the veriest son of wretchedness and despair.

The day, the dreaded day, at length arrived which was to complete his misery. The company were all assembled in the great hall of the castle, from whence they were to proceed to the chapel, and every moment expected the appearance of the bride. The Marquis, surprised at her long delay, sent a messenger to request her immediate presence, who returned in a few minutes with a letter, which he presented to the Marquis, who broke the seal in visible trepidation, and found it from Lady Euphrasia.

She had taken a step, she said, which she must depend on the kind indulgence of her parents to excuse; a step which nothing but a firm conviction that happiness could not be experienced in a union with Lord Mortimer, should have tempted her to. His uniform indifference had at last convinced her, that motives of the most interested nature, influenced his addresses to her, and if her parents inquired into his, or at least Lord Cherbury's conduct, they would find her assertion true, and would consequently, she trusted, excuse her for not submitting to be sacrificed at the shrine of interest. In selecting Mr. Freelove for her choice, she had selected a man, whose addresses were not prompted by selfish views, but by a sincere affection, which he would have openly avowed, had he not been assured, in the present situation of affairs, it would have met with opposition. To avoid therefore a positive act of disobedience she had consented to a private union. To Lord Mortimer and Lord Cherbury, she said, she deemed no apology necessary for her conduct, as their hearts, at least Lord Cherbury's, would at once exculpate her from his own consciousness of not having acted either generously or honourably to her.

The violent transports of passion the Marquis experienced, are not to be described. The Marchioness hastily perused the letter, and her feelings were not

inferior in violence to his. Its contents were soon known, and amazement sat on every countenance. But, oh! what joy did they inspire in the soul of Lord Mortimer; not a respite, or rather a full pardon to the condemned wretch, at the very moment when preparing for death, could have yielded more exquisite delight: but to Lord Cherbury, what a disappointment! it was, indeed, a death stroke to his hopes; the hints in Lady Euphrasia's letter concerning him, plainly declared her knowledge of his conduct; he foresaw an immediate demand from Freeloze; foresaw the disgrace he should experience, when his inability to discharge that demand was known. His soul was shaken in its utmost recesses, and the excruciating anguish of his feelings was indeed as severe a punishment as he could suffer. Pale, speechless, aghast, the most horrid ideas took possession of his mind, yet he sought not to repel them, for any thing was preferable to the shame he saw awaiting him.

Lord Mortimer's indignation was excited by the aspersions cast upon his father, aspersions he imputed entirely to the malice of Lady Euphrasia, and which, from the character of Lord Cherbury, he deemed it unnecessary to attempt refuting. But alas! what a shock did his noble, his unsuspecting nature receive, when, in a short time after the perusal of her letter, one from Freeloze was brought him, which fully proved the truth of her assertions! Freeloze in his little trifling manner, expressed his hopes that there would be no difference between his lordship and him, for whom he expressed the most entire friendship, on account of the fair lady who had honoured him with her regard; declared her partiality was quite irresistible; and moreover, that in love, as in war, every advantage was allowable, begged to trouble his lordship with his compliments to Lord Cherbury, and a request that everything might be prepared to settle matters between them, on his return from his matrimonial ex-

petition. An immediate compliance with this request, he was convinced, could not be in the least distressing; and it was absolutely essential to him, from the éclat with which he designed Lady Euphrasia Freelove should make her bridal entry into public. As to the report, he said, which he had heard relative to Lord Cherbury's losing the fortune which was entrusted to his care for him at the gaming-table, he quite disbelieved it.

The most distressing, the most mortifying sensations took possession of Lord Mortimer at this part of the letter; it explained the reasons of Lord Cherbury's strong anxiety for an alliance with the Rosline family, which Lord Mortimer indeed had often wondered at, and he at once pitied, condemned, and blushed for him. He stole a glance at his father, and his deep despairing look filled him with horror. He resolved, the first opportunity, to declare his knowledge of the fatal secret which oppressed him, and his resolution of making any sacrifice which could possibly remove or lessen his inquietude.

Lord Cherbury was anxious to fly from the now hated castle, ere further confusion overtook him. He mentioned his intention of immediately departing—an intention opposed by the Marquis, but in which he was steady, and also supported by his son.

Every thing was ready for their departure, when Lord Cherbury, overwhelmed by the dreadful agitations he experienced, was seized with a fit of the most violent and alarming nature; he was carried to a chamber, and recourse was obliged to be had to a physician, ere the restoration of his senses was effected; but he was then so weak, that the physician declared if not kept quiet, a return of his disorder might be expected.

Lord Mortimer, tenderly impatient to lighten the burden on his father's mind, dismissed the attendants as soon as he possibly could, and then in the most delicate terms declared his knowledge of his situation.

Lord Cherbury at this started up in the most violent paroxysm of anguish, and vowed he would never survive the discovery of his being a villain. With difficulty could Lord Mortimer compose him; but it was long ere he could prevail on him to hear what he wished to say.

Few there were, he said, who at some period of their lives, he believed, were not led into actions which upon reflection they had reason to regret; he thought not, he meant not to speak slightly of human nature, he only wished to prove, that liable as we all are to frailty—a frailty intended no doubt to check the arrogance of pride and presumption, we should not suffer the remembrance of error, when once sincerely repented of, to plunge us into despair, particularly when, as far as in our power, we meant to atone for it.

Thus did Lord Mortimer attempt to calm the dreadful conflicts of his father's mind, who still continued to inveigh against himself.

The sale of Tudor Hall, Lord Mortimer proceeded, and mortgages upon Lord Cherbury's estates, would enable his father to discharge his debt to Mr. Free-love. He knew, he said, it was tenderness to him which had prevented him ere this from adopting such a plan; but he besought him to let no further consideration on his account make him delay fulfilling immediately the claims of honour and justice. He besought him to believe his tranquillity was more precious to him than anything in life; that the restoration of his peace was far more estimable to him than the possession of the most brilliant fortune;—"a possession which," continued Lord Mortimer, deeply sighing, "I am well convinced will not alone yield happiness. I have long," said he, "looked with an eye of cool indifference on the pomps, the pageantries of life:—disappointed in my tenderest hopes and expectations, wealth, merely on my account, has been long valueless to me; its loss, I make no doubt, nay, I am convinced, I shall have reason to consider as a bless-

ing ; it will compel me to make those exertions which its possession would have rendered unnecessary, and by so doing, in all probability remove from my heart that sadness which has so long clung about it, and enervated all its powers : a profession lies open to receive me, which had I been permitted at a much earlier period, I should have embraced : for a military life was always my passion. At the post of danger I may perhaps have the happiness of performing services for my country, which while loitering supinely in the shade of prosperity, I never could have done. Thus, my dear father," he continued, "you see how erroneous we are in opinions we often form of things, since what we often consider as the bitterest evil leads to the most supreme good. We will, as soon as possible, hasten everything to be prepared for Freelove, and thus, I make no doubt, disappoint the little malice of his soul.

"My aunt, my sister, are unacquainted with your uneasiness, nor shall an intimation of it from me ever transpire to them ; of fortune, sufficient will remain to allow, though not the splendours, the comforts and elegancies of life. As for me, the deprivation of what is considered, and falsely termed, my accustomed indulgencies, will be the most salutary and efficacious thing that could possibly happen to me. In short, I believe that the realization of my plan will render me happy, since, with truth I can assure you, its anticipation has already given more pleasure to my soul, than I thought it would ever have again enjoyed."

Lord Cherbury, overcome by the tenderness, the virtue of his son, by the sacrifice he so willingly offered, so strenuously insisted on making, of his paternal fortune, could not for some minutes speak. At length the struggling emotions of his soul found utterance.

"Oh ! virtue," he exclaimed, while tears of love, of gratitude, of contrition, flowed from his eyes, and

fell upon the hand of his son, clasped within his, "Oh! virtue, I cannot say, like Brutus, thou art but a shade; no, here, in this invaluable son, thou art personified; this son, whom I so cruelly deceived, so bitterly distressed! Oh! gracious powers, would not that heroic, that heaven-born disposition, which now leads him to sign away his paternal fortune for my sake, have also led him to a still greater resignation, the sacrifice of his Amanda, had I entrusted him with my wretched situation. Oh! had I confided in him, what an act of baseness should I have avoided! what pangs, what tortures, should I have prevented his experiencing! but to save my own guilty confusion, I drew wretchedness upon his head, I wrung every fibre of his heart with agony, by making him believe its dearest, its most valued object unworthy of its regard."

Mortimer started; he gasped, he repeated, in faltering accents, these last words; his soul seemed as if it would burst its mortal bounds, and soar to another region, to hear an avowal of his Amanda's purity.

"Oh! Mortimer," cried the Earl, in the deep desponding tone of anguish, "how shall I dare to lift my eyes to thine, after the avowal of the injustice I have done one of the most amiable and loveliest of human beings!" "Oh! tell me," cried Mortimer, in breathless, trembling agitation, "tell me if indeed she is all my fond heart once believed her to be? In mercy, in pity, delay not to inform me."

Slowly, in consequence of his weakness, but with all the willingness of a contrite spirit, anxious to do justice to the injured, did Lord Cherbury reveal all that had passed between him and Amanda. "Poor Fitzalan," cried he, as he finished his relation, "poor unhappy friend; from thy cold grave, couldst thou have known the transactions of this world, how must thy good and feeling spirit have reproached me for my barbarity to thy orphan, in robbing her of the only stipend thy adverse fortune had power to leave her, a pure and spotless fame!"

Lord Mortimer groaned with anguish; every reproachful word he had uttered to Amanda, darted upon his remembrance, and was like so many daggers to his heart. It was his father that oppressed her; this knowledge aggravated his feelings, but stifled his reproaches! it was a father contrite, perhaps at that very moment stretched upon a death-bed, therefore he forgave him.

He cast his eyes around, as if in that moment he had hoped to behold her, have an opportunity of falling prostrate at her feet, and imploring her forgiveness: he cast his eyes around, as if imagining he should see her, and be allowed to fold her to his beating heart, and ask her soft voice to pronounce his pardon.

“Oh! thou lovely mourner,” he exclaimed to himself, while a gush of sorrow burst from his eyes, “Oh! thou lovely mourner, when I censured, reviled, upbraided you, even at that very period your heart was suffering the most excruciating anguish. Yes, Amanda, he who would willingly have laid down life to yield thee peace, even he was led to aggravate thy woes. With what gentleness, what unexampled patience didst thou bear my reproaches! no sudden ray of indignation for purity so insulted, innocence so arraigned, flashed from thy eyes; the beams of meekness and resignation alone stole from beneath their tearful lids.

“No sweet hope of being able to atone, no delightful idea of being able to make reparation for my injustice, now alleviates the poignancy of my feelings: since fate interposed between us in the hour of prosperity, I cannot, in the bleak and chilling period of adversity, seek to unite your destiny with mine; now almost the child of want myself, a soldier of fortune, obliged by the sword to earn my bread, I cannot think of leading you into difficulties and dangers greater than you ever before experienced. Oh! my Amanda, may the calm shade of security be for ever

thine; thy Mortimer, thy ever faithful, ever adoring Mortimer, will not, from any selfish consideration, seek to lead thee from it. If thy loss be agonizing, oh ! how much more agonizing to possess but to see thee in danger or distress; I will go then into new scenes of life with only thy dear, thy sweet and worshipped idea to cheer and to support me—an idea I shall lose but with life, and which to know I may cherish, indulge, adore, without a reproach from reason for weakness in so doing, is a sweet and soothing consolation."

The indulgence of feelings, such as his language expressed, he was obliged to forego, in order to fulfil the wish he felt of alleviating the situation of his father; but his attention was unable to lighten the anguish which oppressed the mind of Lord Cherbury; remorse for his past conduct, mortification at being lessened in the estimation of his son, sorrow for the injury he was compelled to do him, to be extricated from the power of Freelove, all preyed upon his mind, and produced the most violent agitations, and an alarming repetition of fits.

Things remained in this situation for a few days, during which time no intelligence had been received of Euphrasia, when one morning, as Lord Mortimer was sitting for a few minutes with the Marquis and Marchioness, a servant entered the apartment, and informed his lord that a gentleman was just arrived at the castle, who requested to be introduced to his presence. The Marquis and Marchioness instantly concluded this was some person sent as an intercessor from Lady Euphrasia, and they instantly admitted him, in order to have an opportunity of assuring her ladyship, through his means, it must be some time (if indeed at all) ere they could possibly forgive her disrespect and disobedience.

Lord Mortimer would have retired, but was requested to stay, and complied, prompted indeed by curiosity to hear what kind of apology or message

Lady Euphrasia had sent. A man of a most pleasing appearance entered, and was received with the most frigid politeness. He looked embarrassed, agitated, even distressed. He attempted several times to speak, but the words still died away undistinguished. At length the Marchioness, yielding to the natural impetuosity of her soul, hastily desired he would reveal what had procured them the honour of his visit.

"A circumstance of the most unhappy nature, madam," he replied, in a hesitating voice, "I came with the hope, the expectation of being able to break it by degrees, so as not totally to overpower; but I find myself unequal to the distressing task." "I fancy, sir," cried the Marchioness, "both the Marquis and I are already aware of the circumstance you allude to." "Alas! madam," said the stranger, fixing his eyes with a mournful earnestness on her face, "I cannot think so; if you were, it would not be in human, in paternal nature to appear as you now do." He stopped, he turned pale, he trembled, his emotions became contagious.

"Tell me," said the Marquis, in a voice scarcely articulate, "I beseech you, without delay, the meaning of your words."

The stranger essayed to speak, but could not: words indeed were scarcely necessary to declare that he had something shocking to reveal. His auditors, like old Northumberland, might have said, "The paleness on thy cheek is apter than thy tongue to tell thy errand." "Something dreadful has happened to my child," said the Marchioness forgetting in that agonizing moment all displeasure.

"Alas! madam," cried the stranger, while a trickling tear denoted his sensibility for the sorrows he was about giving rise to; "alas! madam, your fears are too well founded; to torture you with longer suspense would be barbarity. Something dreadful has happened, indeed—Lady Euphrasia in this world will never more be sensible of your kindness." A wild,

a piercing, agonizing shriek burst from the lips of the Marchioness, as she dropped senseless from her seat. The Marquis was sinking from his, had not Lord Mortimer, who sat by him, timely started up, and though trembling himself with horror, caught him in his arms. The servants were summoned, the still insensible Marchioness was carried to her chamber, the wretched Marquis reviving in a few minutes, if that could be called reviving, which was only a keener perception of misery, demanded in a tone of anguish, the whole particulars of the sad event; yet scarcely had the stranger began to comply with his request, ere, with all the wild, inconsistency of grief, he bid him to forbear, and, shuddering, declared he could not listen to the dreadful particulars; but it were needless, as well as impossible, to describe the feelings of the wretched parents, who in one moment beheld their hopes, their wishes, their expectations finally destroyed: Oh! what an awful lesson did they inculcate of the instability of human happiness, of the insufficiency of rank or riches to retain it. This was one of the events which Providence, in its infinite wisdom, makes use of to arrest the thoughtless in their career of dissipation, and check the arrogance of pride and vanity. When we behold the proud, the wealthy, the illustrious, suddenly surprised by calamity, and sinking beneath its stroke, we naturally reflect on the frail tenure of earthly possessions, and from the reflection, consider how we may best attain that happiness which cannot change; the human heart is in general so formed as to require something great and striking to interest and afflict it. Thus a similar misfortune happening to a person in a conspicuous, and to one in an obscure situation, would not, in all probability, equally affect or call home the wandering thought to sadness and reflection. The humble floweret, trampled to the dust, is passed with an eye of careless indifference; but the proud oak torn from the earth, and levelled by the storm, is

viewed with wonder and affright. The horrors of the blow which overwhelmed the Marquis and Marchioness, were augmented by the secret whispers of conscience that seemed to say it was a blow of retribution from a Being all righteous and all just, whose most sacred laws they had violated, in oppressing the widow, and defrauding the orphan.—Oh! what an augmentation of misery is it to think it merited remorse, like the vengeance of Heaven, seemed now awakened to sleep no more; no longer could they palliate their conduct, no longer avoid retrospection, a retrospection which heightened the gloomy horrors of the future. In Lady Euphrasia, all the hopes, the affections of the Marquis and Marchioness were centered; she alone had ever made them feel the tenderness of humanity, yet she was not less the darling of their love, than the idol of their pride; in her they beheld the being who was to support the honours of their house, and transmit their names to posterity; in her they beheld the being who gave them an opportunity of gratifying the malevolent, as well as the tender and ambitious passions of their souls; the next heir to the Marquis's title and fortune had irreconcilably disobliged him; as a means therefore of disappointing him, if on no other account, Lady Euphrasia would have been regarded by them.

Though she had disappointed and displeased them by her recent act of disobedience, and though they had deemed it essential to their consequence to display that displeasure, yet they secretly resolved not long to withhold forgiveness from her, and also to take immediate steps for ennobling Freelove.

For Lady Euphrasia they felt indeed a tenderness her heart for them was totally a stranger to; it seemed, indeed, as if, cold and indifferent to all mankind, their affection were stronger for being confined in one channel. In the step she had taken, Lady Euphrasia only considered the gratification of her revenge. Freelove, as the ward of Lord Cherbury, in

honour to him, had been invited to the nuptials; he accepted the invitation, but instead of accompanying, promised to follow the bridal party to the castle. A day or two ere he intended setting out, by some accidental chance, he got into company with the very person to whom Lord Cherbury had lost so much, and on whose account he had committed an action which had entailed the most excruciating remorse upon him:—this person was acquainted with the whole transaction; he had promised to keep his knowledge secret, but the promises of the worthless are of little avail. A slight expression, which, in a moment of anxiety, had involuntarily dropped from Lord Cherbury, had stung him to the soul, because he knew too well its justice, and inspired him with the most inveterate hatred, and rancorous desire of revenge. His unexpectedly meeting Freelove, afforded him an opportunity of gratifying both these propensities, and he scrupled not to avail himself of it. Freelove was astonished, and when the first violence of astonishment was over, delighted.

To triumph over the proud soul of Lord Cherbury and his son, was indeed an idea which afforded rapture; both he had ever disliked, the latter particularly: he disliked him from the superiority which he saw in every respect he possessed over himself. A stranger to noble emulation, he sought not, by study or imitation, to aspire to any of those graces or perfections he beheld in Lord Mortimer; he sought alone to depreciate them, and when he found that impossible, beheld him with greater envy and malignity than ever. To wound Lord Mortimer through the bosom of his father, to overwhelm him with confusion, by publicly displaying the error of that father, were ideas of the most exquisite delight—ideas which the wealth of worlds would scarcely have tempted him to forego; so sweet is any triumph, however accidental or imaginary, over a noble object to an envious mind, which ever hates that ex-

cellence it cannot reach. No fear of self-interest being injured, checked his pleasure; the fortune of Lord Cherbury he knew sufficient to answer for his violated trust; thus had he another source of triumph in the prospect of having those so long considered as the proud rivals of his wealth and splendour, cast into the shade: his pleasure, however, from this idea, was short lived, when he reflected that Lord Mortimer's union with Lady Euphrasia, would totally exempt him from feeling any inconvenience from his father's conduct: but could not this union be prevented? Freeloze asked himself. He still wanted a short period of being of age, consequently had no right, at present, to demand a settlement of his affairs from Lord Cherbury; he might, however, privately inform Lady Euphrasia of the affair so recently communicated to him. No sooner did he conceive this scheme, than he glowed with impatience to put it into execution: he hastened to the Marquis's, whither, indeed, the extravagant and foppish preparations he had made for the projected nuptials had before prevented his going, and took the first opportunity which offered, of revealing to Lady Euphrasia, as if from the purest friendship, the conduct of Lord Cherbury, and the derangement of his affairs.

Lady Euphrasia was at once surprised and incensed; the reason for an union between her and his son, being so ardently desired by Lord Cherbury, was now fully explained, and she beheld herself as an object addressed, merely from a view of repairing a ruined fortune; but this view she resolved to disappoint. Such was the implacable nature of her disposition, that had this disappointment occasioned the destruction of her own peace, it would not have made her relinquish it; but this was not the case;—in sacrificing all ideas of an union with Lord Mortimer to her offended pride, she sacrificed no wish or inclination of her soul. Lord

Mortimer, though the object of her admiration, had never been the object of her love; she was, indeed, incapable of feeling that passion; her admiration had, however, long since given place to resentment, at the cool indifference with which he regarded her; she would have opposed a marriage with him, but for fear that he might, thus freed, attach himself to Amanda. The moment, however, she knew an union with her was necessary for the establishment of his fortune, fear, with every consideration which could oppose it, vanished before the idea of disappointing his views, and retaliating upon him that uneasiness he had, from wounded pride, made her experience by his cold and unalterable behaviour to her.

She at first determined to acquaint the Marquis of what she had heard, but a little reflection made her drop this determination. He had always professed a warm regard for Lord Cherbury, and she feared that regard would still lead him to insist on the nuptials taking place; she was not long in concerting a scheme to render such a measure impracticable, and Free love she resolved to make an instrument for forwarding, or rather executing her revenge. She hesitated not to say, she had always disliked Lord Mortimer; that, in short, there was but one being she could ever think, ever hope to be happy with. Her broken sentences, her looks, her affected confusion, all revealed to Free love that he was that object; the rapture this discovery inspired, he could not conceal; the flattering expressions of Lady Euphrasia were repaid by the most extravagant compliments, the warmest professions, the strongest assurances of never-dying love. This soon led to what she desired, and in a short space an elopement was agreed to, and every thing relative to it settled. Free love's own servants and equipage were at the Castle, and consequently but little difficulty attended the arrangement of their plan. In Lady Euphrasia's

eyes Freelove had no other value than what he now merely derived from being an instrument in gratifying the haughty and revengeful passions of her nature. She regarded him, indeed, with sovereign contempt; his fortune, however, she knew would give him consequence in the world, and she was convinced she should find him that quiet, that easy convenient husband, which a woman of fashion finds so necessary; in short, she looked forward to being the uncontrolled mistress of her own actions, and without a doubt but that she should meet many objects as deserving of her admiration, and infinitely more grateful for it than ever Lord Mortimer had been.

Flushed with such a pleasing prospect, she quitted the Castle—that Castle she was destined never more to see; at the moment, the very moment she smiled with joy and expectation, the shaft, the unerring shaft was raised against her breast.

The marriage ceremony over, they hastened to the vicinity of the Castle, in order to send an apologizing letter, as usual on such occasions. The night was dark and dreary, the road rugged and dangerous; the postillions ventured to say it would be better to halt for the night; but this was opposed by Lady Euphrasia. They were within a few miles of the destined termination of their journey, and, pursuant to her commands, they proceeded. In a few minutes after this, the horses, startled by a sudden light which gleamed across the path, began plunging in the most alarming manner. A frightful precipice lay on one side, and the horses, in spite of all the efforts of the postillions, continued to approach it. Freelove, in this dreadful moment, lost all consideration but for himself! he burst open the chariot-door, and leaped into the road. His companion was unable to follow his example; she had fainted at the first intimation of danger. The postillions with difficulty dismounted; the other servants came to their assistance and endeavoured to restrain the horses:

every effort was useless, they broke from their hold, and plunged down the precipice. The servants had heard the chariot-door open; they therefore concluded, for it was too dark to see, that both their master and Lady Euphrasia were safe. But who can describe their horror, when a loud shriek from him declared her situation! Some of them immediately hastened, as fast as their trembling limbs could carry them, to the house adjoining the road, from whence the fatal light had gleamed, which caused the sad catastrophe; they revealed it in a few words, and implored immediate assistance. The master of the house was a man of the greatest humanity; he was inexpressibly shocked at what he had heard, and joined himself in giving the assistance that was desired.

With lanterns they proceeded down a winding path, cut in the precipice, and soon discovered the objects of their search. The horses were already dead, the chariot was shattered to pieces; they took up some of the fragments, and discovered beneath them the lifeless body of the unfortunate Lady Euphrasia.

The stranger burst into tears at a sight of so much horror; and, in a voice scarcely audible, gave orders for her being conveyed to his house; but when a better light gave a more perfect view of the mangled remains, all acknowledged that, since so fatal an accident had befallen her, Heaven was merciful in taking a life whose continuance would have made her endure the most excruciating tortures.

Freelove was now enquired for: he had fainted on the road, but in a few minutes after he was brought in, recovered his senses, and the first use he made of them was to enquire whether he was dead or alive:—upon receiving the comfortable assurance of the latter, he congratulated himself, in a manner so warm, upon his escape, as plainly proved self was his whole and sole consideration. No great prepa-

rations, on account of his feelings, were requisite to inform him of the fate of Lady Euphrasia; he shook his head on hearing it; said it was what he already guessed from the devilish plunge of the horses; declared it was a most unfortunate affair, and expressed a kind of terror at what the Marquis might say to it, as if he could have been accused of being accessory to it.

Mr. Murry, the gentleman whose house had received him, offered to undertake the distressing task of breaking the affair to Lady Euphrasia's family, an offer Freelove gladly accepted, declaring he felt himself too much disordered in mind and body to be able to give any directions relative to what was necessary to be done.

How Mr. Murry executed his task is already known; but it was long ere the emotions of the Marquis would suffer him to say, he wished the remains of Lady Euphrasia to be brought to the Castle, that all the honours due to her birth should be paid them. This was accordingly done, and the Castle, so lately ornamented for her nuptials, was hung with black, and all the pageantries of death.

The Marquis and Marchioness confined themselves, in the deepest anguish, to their apartments; their domestics, filled with terror and amazement, glided about like pale spectres, and all was a scene of solemnity and sadness.

Every moment Lord Mortimer could spare from his father, he devoted to the Marquis. Lady Euphrasia had ever been an object of indifference, nay, of dislike to him; but the manner of her death, notwithstanding, shocked him to the soul; his dislike was forgotten; he thought of her only with pity and compassion, and the tears he mingled with the Marquis, were the tears of unfeigned sympathy and regret.

Lady Martha and Lady Araminta were equally attentive to the Marchioness; the time not spent with Lord Cherbury, was devoted to her. They used not

unavailing arguments to conquer a grief which Nature, as her rightful tribute, demands; but they soothed that grief, by shewing they sincerely mourned its source.

Lord Cherbury had but short intervals of reason; those intervals were employed by Lord Mortimer in trying to compose his mind: and by him in blessing his son for those endeavours, and congratulating himself on the prospect of approaching dissolution.

His words unutterably affected Lord Mortimer; he had reason to believe they were dictated by a prophetic spirit; and the dismal peal which rung from morning till night, for Lady Euphrasia, sounded in his ear as the knell of his expiring father.

Things were in this situation in the Castle, when Oscar, and his friend Sir Charles Bingley, arrived at it, and, without sending in their names, requested immediate permission to the Marquis's presence, upon business of importance.

Their request was complied with, from an idea that they came from Frelove, to whom the Marquis and Marchioness, from respect and affection to the memory of their daughter, had determined to pay every attention.

The Marquis knew, and was personally known to Sir Charles; he was infinitely surprised by his appearance; but how much was that surprise increased, when Sir Charles, taking Oscar by the hand, presented him to the Marquis, as the son of Lady Fitzalan, the rightful heir to the Earl of Dunreath!

The Marquis was confounded, he trembled at these words; and his confusion, had such a testimony been wanting, would have been sufficient to prove his guilt.

He at last, though with a faltering voice, desired to know, by what means Sir Charles could justify, or support his assertion.

Sir Charles, for Oscar was too much agitated to speak, as briefly as possible, related all the particu-

lars which had led to the discovery of the Earl's will; and his friend, he added, with the generosity of a noble mind, wished, as much as possible, to spare the feelings, and save the honour of those with whom he was connected; a wish, which nothing but a hesitation in complying with his just and well supported claim, could destroy.

The Marquis's agitation increased; already was he stript of happiness, and he now saw himself on the point of being stripped of honour. An hour before he had imagined his wretchedness could not be augmented; he was now convinced human misery cannot be complete, without the loss of reputation. In the idea of being esteemed; of being thought undeserving our misfortunes, there is a sweet, a secret balm, which meliorates the greatest sorrow. Of riches, in his own right, the Marquis ever possessed more than sufficient for all his expences; those expences would now, comparatively speaking, be reduced within very narrow bounds; for the vain pride which had led him to delight in pomp and ostentation, died with Lady Euphrasia. Since, therefore, of his fortune, such a super-abundance would remain, it was unnecessary, as well as unjust, to detain what he had no pretensions to: but he feared, tamely acquiescing to this unexpected claim, would be to acknowledge himself a villain: 'tis true, indeed, that his newly felt remorse had inspired him with a wish of making reparation for his past injustice; but false shame starting up, hitherto opposed it; and even now, when an opportunity offered of accomplishing his wish, still continued to oppose it, lest the scorn and contempt he dreaded should at length be his portion for his long injustice.

Irresolute how to act, he sat for some time silent and embarrassed, till at length recollecting his manner was probably betraying what he wished to conceal, namely, the knowledge of the will, he said, with some sternness, "that till he inspected into the

affair, so recently laid before him, he could not, nor was it to be expected, he should say how he would act ; an inspection which, under the melancholy circumstances he then laboured, he could not possibly make for some time. Had Mr. Fitzalan," he added, "possessed in reality that generosity Sir Charles's partiality ascribed to him, he would not, at a period so distressing, have appeared to make such a claim. To delicacy and sensibility the privileges of grief were ever held sacred ; those privileges they had both violated ; they had intruded on his sorrows ; they had even insulted him, by appearing on such a business before him, ere the last rites were paid to his lamented child."

Sir Charles and Oscar were inexpressibly shocked — both were totally ignorant of the recent event.

Oscar as he recovered from the surprise the Marquis's words had given him, declared, in the impassioned language of a noble mind, hurt by being thus destitute of sensibility, "that the Marquis had arraigned him unjustly ; had he known of his sorrows," he said, "nothing should have tempted him to intrude upon them : he mourned, he respected them : he besought him to believe him sincere in what he uttered." A tear, an involuntary tear, as he spoke, started into his eye, and trickling down his cheek, denoted his sincerity.

The Marquis's heart smote him as he beheld this tear ; it reproached him more than the keenest words could have done, and operated more in Oscar's favour than any arguments, however eloquent.

Had this young man, thought he, been really illiberal when I reproached him for want of sensibility, how well might he have retaliated upon me my more flagrant want of justice and humanity ; but no, he sees I am a son of sorrow, and he will not break the reed which Heaven has already smitten.

Tears gushed from his eyes : he involuntarily extended his hand to Oscar ; "I see," said he, "I see

maced, I have unjustly arraigned you, but I will endeavour to atone for my error; at present rest satisfied with an assurance, that whatever is equitable shall be done, and that, let events turn out as they may, I shall ever feel myself your friend." Oscar again expressed his regret for having waited on him at such a period, and requested he would dismiss for the present the subject they had been talking of from his mind; the Marquis, still more pleased with his manner, desired his direction, and assured him he should hear from him sooner than he expected.

As soon as they retired, his agitation decreased, and of course he was better qualified to consider how he should act; that restitution his conscience prompted, but his false ideas of shame had prevented, he now found he should be compelled to make; how to make it therefore, so as to avoid total disgrace, was what he considered. At last he adopted a scheme, which the sensibility of Oscar, he flattered himself, would enable him to accomplish: this was to declare that by the Earl of Dunreath's will, Mr. Fitzalan was heir to his estates, in case of the death of Lady Euphrasia; that in consequence therefore of this event he had come to take possession of them; that Lady Dunreath (whose residence at Dunreath Abbey he could not now hope to conceal) was but lately returned from a convent in France, where for many years she had resided. To Oscar he intended saying, from her ill conduct, he and the Marchioness had been tempted to sequester her from the world, in order to save her from open shame and derision; and that her declaration of a will they had always believed the mere fabrication of her brain, in order, as he supposed, to give them uneasiness. This scheme once formed, his heart felt a little relieved of the heavy burden of fear and inquietude. He repaired to the Marchioness's apartment, and broke the affair gently to her, adding at the same time, that sensible as they now must be of the vanities and pur-

THE ABBEY.

suits of human life, it was time for them to endeavour to make their peace with Heaven. Affliction had taught penitence to the Marchioness, as well as to her husband: she approved of his scheme, and thought with them, that the sooner their intention of making restitution was known, the greater would be the probability of its being accomplished; Oscar, therefore, the next day received a letter from the Marquis, specifying at once his intention and his wishes. With those wishes Oscar generously complied: his noble soul was superior to a triumph over a fallen enemy; and he had always wished rather to save from, than expose the Marquis to disgrace; he hastened as soon as possible to the castle, agreeably to a request contained in the letter, to assure the Marquis his conduct throughout the whole affair would be regulated according to his desire.

Perhaps at this moment public contempt could not have humbled the Marquis more than such generosity, when he drew a comparison between himself and the person he had so long injured; the striking contrast wounded his very soul, and he groaned at the degradation he suffered in his own eyes. He told Oscar, as soon as the last sad duties were performed to his daughter, he would settle every thing with him, and then perhaps be able to introduce him to the Marchioness. He desired he might take up his residence in the castle, and expressed a wish that he would attend the funeral of Lady Euphrasia as one of the chief mourners. Oscar declined the former; but promised, with a faltering voice, to comply with the latter request. He then retired, and the Marquis, who had been roused from the indulgence of his grief by a wish of preserving his character, again relapsed into its wretchedness. He desired Oscar to make no secret of his now being heir to the Earl of Dunreath, and said he would mention it himself in his family. Through this medium therefore did this surprising intelligence reach Lord Mortimer, and his heart di-

lated with sudden joy at the idea of his Amanda and her brother at last enjoying independence and prosperity.

In a few hours after this, the sufferings of Lord Cherbury were terminated; his last faltering accents pronounced blessings on his son. Oh! how sweet were those blessings—how different were the feelings of Lord Mortimer from the callous sons of dissipation, who seem to watch with impatience the last struggles of a parent, that they may have more extensive means of gratifying their inordinate desires. The feelings of Lord Mortimer were soothed by reflecting he had done every thing in his power for restoring the tranquillity of his father, and his regret was lessened by the conviction that Lord Cherbury, after the discovery of his conduct, could never more in this life have experienced happiness; he therefore, with tender pity, resigned him to his God, humbly trusting that his penitence had atoned for his frailties and insured him felicity.

He now bade adieu to the castle and its wretched owners, and accompanied Lady Martha and his sister to Thornbury, at which the burying place of the family lay. Here he continued till the remains of his father arrived, and were interred; he then proceeded to London, to put into execution the plan he had projected for his father: he immediately advertised the Tudor estate; a step of this kind could not be concealed from Lady Martha; but the mortgages on the other estates he resolved carefully to guard from her knowledge, lest suspicions prejudicial to the memory of his father should arise in her mind; but during this period the idea of Amanda was not absent from his soul; neither grief nor business could banish it a moment, and again a thousand fond and flattering hopes concerning her had revived, when a sudden blow dispersed them all, and plunged him, if possible, into greater wretchedness than he had ever before experienced. He heard it confidently report-

ed, that the Earl of Dunreath's sister, (for Oscar by this time had claimed, and been allowed to take the title of his grandfather) was to be married to Sir Charles Bingley: the friendship which he knew subsisted between the Earl and Sir Charles rendered this too probable; but if a doubt concerning it still lingered in his mind, it was destroyed, when Sir Charles waited on him to treat about the purchase of Tudor-Hall, it instantly occurring that this purchase was made by the desire of Amanda. Unable to command his feelings, he referred Sir Charles to his agent, and abruptly retired. He called her cruel and ungrateful; after all his sufferings on her account, did he deserve so soon to be banished her remembrance,—so soon supplanted in her affections by another,—by one too who never had, who never would have an opportunity of giving such proofs as he had done of constancy and love? She is lost then, he sighed! she is lost for ever! Oh! what avails the vindication of her fame? Is it not an augmentation of my misery? Oh! my father, of what a treasure did you despoil me! But let me not disturb the sacred ashes of the dead—rest—rest—in peace—thou venerable author of my being, and may the involuntary expression of heart-rending anguish be forgiven! Amanda, then, he continued, after a pause, will, indeed, be mistress of Tudor-Hall; but never will a sigh for him who once was its owner heave her bosom; she will wander beneath those shades, where so often she has heard my vows of unalterable love—vows which, alas! my heart has too fully observed, and listen to similar ones from Sir Charles; well, this is the last stroke fate can level at my peace.

Lord Mortimer (or, as in future we must style him, Lord Cherbury) had indeed imagined that the affections of Amanda, like his own, were unalterable: he had therefore indulged the rapturous idea, that, by again seeking an union with her, he should promote the happiness of both. It is true, he knew she would

possess a fortune infinitely superior to what he had now a right to expect; but after the proofs he had given of disinterested attachment, not only she, but the world, he was convinced, would acquit him of any selfish motives in the renewal of his addresses. — His hopes destroyed, — his prospects blasted by what he heard, he resolved, as soon as the affairs were settled, to go abroad. The death of his father had rendered his entering the army unnecessary, and his spirits were too much broken, his health too much impaired, for him voluntarily now to embrace that destiny.

On the purchase of Tudor-Hall being completed by Sir Charles, it was necessary for Lord Cherbury to see his steward; he preferred going, to sending for him, prompted indeed by a melancholy wish of paying a last visit to Tudor-Hall, endeared to his heart by a thousand fond remembrances. On his arrival, he took up his abode at the steward's for a day or two; after a strict injunction to him of concealing his being there: it was after a ramble through every spot about the demesne, which he had ever trodden with Amanda, that he repaired to the library and discovered her; he was ignorant of her being in the country. — Oh! then, how great was his surprise — how exquisite his emotions at her unexpected sight!

I shall not attempt to go over the scene I have already tried to describe; suffice it to say, that the desire she betrayed of hastening from him he imputed to the alteration of her sentiments with respect to him and Sir Charles; when undeceived in this respect, his rapture was as great as ever it had before been at the idea of her love, and like Amanda, he declared his sufferings were now amply rewarded.

CHAPTER LIII.

No never from this hour to part,
We'll live and love so true;
The sigh that rends thy constant heart,
Shall break thy lover's too.

“BUT, my love,” cried Lord Cherbury, as he wiped away the tears which pity and horror at the fate of Lady Euphrasia, had caused Amanda to shed, “Will your brother, think you, sanction our happiness? Will he, who might aspire so high for a sister, thus at once possessed of beauty and fortune, bestow her on one whose title may now almost be considered an empty one?” “Oh! do not wrong his noble nature by such a doubt,” exclaimed Amanda, “Yes, with pride, with pleasure, with delight, will he bestow his sister upon the esteemed, the beloved of her heart; upon him, who unwarpd by narrow prejudice or selfish interest, sought her in the low shade of obscurity, to lay, all friendless and forlorn as she was, his fortune at her feet.

“Could he indeed be ungrateful to such kindness; could he attempt to influence me to another choice my heart would at once repulse the effort, and avow its fixed determination; but he is incapable of such conduct; my Oscar is all that is generous and feeling: need I say more, than that a spirit congenial to yours animates his breast?”

Lord Cherbury clasped her to his heart, “Dearest, loveliest of human beings,” he exclaimed, “shall I at length call you mine? after all my sorrows, my difficulties, shall I indeed receive so precious a reward? oh! wonder not my Amanda, if I doubt the reality of so sudden a reverse of situation: I feel as if under the influence of a happy dream; but, good Heaven! a dream from which I should never wish to be awakened.”

Amanda now recollected, that if she staid much

longer from the cottage she would have some one coming in quest of her; she informed Lord Cherbury of this, and rose to depart, but he would not suffer her to depart alone, neither did she desire it.

The nurse and her daughter Betsy were in the cottage at her return to it: to describe the surprise of the former at the appearance of Lord Cherbury, is impossible—a surprise mingled with indignation, at the idea of his falsehood to her darling child; but when undeceived in that respect, her transports were of the most extravagant nature.

“Well, she thanked Heaven,” she said, “she should now see her tear child hold up her head again, and look as handsome as ever. Aye, she had always doubted,” she said, “that his lortship was not one of the false-hearted men she had so often heard her old grandmother talk of.” “My good nurse,” said Lord Cherbury smiling, “you will then give me your dear child with all your heart?” “Aye, that I will, my lord,” she replied, “and this very moment too, if I could.” “Well,” cried Amanda, “his lordship will be satisfied at present with getting his dinner from you.”

She then desired the things to be brought to the little arbour, already described in the beginning of this book, and proceeded to it with Lord Cherbury.

The mention of dinner threw nurse and her daughter into universal commotion.

“Good lack! how unfortunate it was she had nothing hot or nice to lay before his lortship; how could she think he could dine upon cold lamb and sallad! Well, this was all Miss Amanda’s fault, who would never let her do as she wished.”

With the utmost difficulty she was persuaded he could dine upon these things. The cloth was laid upon the flowery turf, beneath the spreading branches of the arbour. The delicacies of the dairy were added to their repast, and Betsy provided a dessert of new filberts.

Never had Lord Cherbury partaken of so delicious a meal; never had he and Amanda experienced such happiness: a happiness derived from what might be termed the sober certainty of waking bliss. The pleasure, the tenderness of their souls, beamed in expressive glances from their eyes, and they were now more convinced than ever, that the humble scenes of life were best calculated for the promotion of felicity.

Lord Cherbury felt more reconciled than he had done before to the diminution of his fortune; he yet retained sufficient for the comforts, and many of the elegancies of life; the splendour he lost was insignificant in his eyes; his present situation proved happiness could be enjoyed without it, and he knew it equally disregarded by his Amanda. He asked himself

— What was the world to them,
Its pomps, its pleasures, and its nonsense all;
Who in each other clasp, whatever fair
High fancy forms, or lavish hearts can wish.

All nature looked gay and smiling around him; he inhaled the balmy breath of opening flowers, and through the verdant canopy he sat beneath, he saw the bright azure of the heavens, and felt the benignant influence of the sun, whose potent beams heightened to glowing luxuriance the beauties of the surrounding landscape. He expressed his feelings to Amanda; he heard her declare the similarity of hers; heard her, with all the sweet enthusiasm of a refined and animated mind, expatiate on the lovely scene around them. Oh! what tender remembrances did it awaken, and what delightful plans of felicity did they sketch! Lord Cherbury would hear from Amanda all she had suffered since their separation; and could his love and esteem have been increased, her patient endurance of the sorrows she related would have increased them.

They did not leave the garden till a dusky hue had overspread the landscape, “Oh! with what emotions did Amanda watch the setting sun, whose ris-

ing beams she had beheld with eyes obscured by tears of sorrow.

As they sat at tea in the room, she could not avoid noticing the alteration in the nurse's dress who attended; she had put on all her holiday finery, and to evince her wish of amusing her guests, had sent for the blind harper, whom she stationed outside the cottage. His music drew a number of the neighbouring cottagers about him, and they would soon have led up a dance in the vale, had not the nurse prevented them, lest they should disturb her guests. Lord Cherbury, however, insisted on their being gratified, and sending for his servant, ordered him to provide refreshments for them, and to reward the harper.

He would not leave Amanda till he had her permission to come the next morning, as soon as he could hope to see her; accordingly the first voice she heard on rising was his chatting to the nurse. We may believe she did not spend many minutes at her toilet: the neat simplicity of her dress, indeed never required she should do so, and in a very short time she joined him. They walked out till breakfast was ready.

Together trod the morning dews, and gather'd
In their prime, fresh blooming sweets.

Amanda, in hourly expectation of her brother's arrival, wished, ere he came, to inform the inhabitants of the cottage of the alteration of his fortune. This, with the assistance of Lord Cherbury, she took an opportunity of doing in the course of the day to the nurse. Had she been sole-relater, she feared she should have been overwhelmed with questions. Joy and wonder were excited in an extreme degree by this relation, and nothing but the nurse's hurry and impatience to communicate it to her family, could have prevented her from asking again and again a repetition of it.

Lord Cherbury now, as on the foregoing day, dined

with Amanda: her expectations relative to the speedy arrival of her brother were not disappointed. While sitting after dinner with Lord Cherbury in the garden, the nurse, half breathless, came running to tell them, that a superb coach and four, which to be sure must be my Lord Dunreath's, was coming down the road.

Lord Cherbury coloured with emotion. Amanda did not wish he and her brother should meet, till she had explained every thing relative to him. By her desire he retired to the valley, to which a winding path from the garden descended, whilst she hurried to the cottage to receive and welcome her beloved brother; their meeting was at once tender and affecting; the faithful Edwins surrounded Oscar with delight and rapture, pouring forth, in their simple style, congratulations on his happy fortune, and their wishes for his long enjoying it. He thanked them with a starting tear of sensibility; he assured them that their attentions to his dear sister, his lamented parents, his infant years, entitled them to lasting gratitude." As soon as he and Amanda could disengage themselves from the good creatures, without wounding their feelings, they retired to her room, where Oscar related, as we have already done, all that passed between him and the Marquis of Rosline.

As soon as the funeral of Lady Euphrasia was over, the Marquis, according to his promise, settled every thing with him, and put him into formal possession of Dunreath-Abbey. By the Marquis's desire he then waited upon Lady Dunreath to inform her she was at liberty, and to request she would not contradict the assertion of having been abroad: Mrs. Bruce had previously informed her of the revolution of affairs. "I own," continued Oscar, "from the cruelty to my mother, and the depravity of her conduct, I was strongly prejudiced against her, attributing, I acknowledge her doing justice to us in some degree, to her resentment against the Marquis; but

the moment I entered her apartment this prejudice vanished, giving place to the softer emotions of pity and tenderness, while a thorough conviction of her sincere repentance broke upon my soul; though prepared to see a form reduced by affliction and confinement, I was not by any means prepared to see a form so emaciated, so death-like,—a faint motion of her head, as I entered, alone proved her existence; had the world been given me to do so, I think I could not have broken a silence so awful. At length she spoke, and in language that pierced my heart, implored my forgiveness for the sufferings she had caused me to endure. Repeatedly I assured her of it; but this rather heightened than diminished her agitation, and tears and sobs spoke the anguish of her soul. “I have lived,” she cried, “to justify the ways of Providence to men, and prove that, however calamity may oppress the virtuous, they or their descendants should at last flourish. I have lived to see my contrite wish accomplished, and the last summons will now be a welcome release.”—She expressed an ardent desire to see her daughter. “The pitying tears of a mother,” she exclaimed, “may be as balm to her wounded heart. Oh! my prophetic words, how often have I prayed that the punishment I then denounced against her might be averted!”

“I signified her desire,” continued Oscar, “to the Marquis; he found the Marchioness at first reluctant to it, from a secret dread, I suppose, of seeing an object so injured; but she at last consented, and I was requested to bring Lady Dunreath from the Abbey, and conduct her to the Marchioness’s room. I will not attempt to describe the scene which passed between affection on one hand, and penitence on the other; the Marchioness indeed seemed truly penitent, remorse and horror were visible in her countenance, as she gazed upon her injured parent. I begged Lady Dunreath, if agreeable to her, still to consider the Abbey as her residence; this, however,

she declined, and it was determined she should continue with her daughter. Her last moments may, perhaps, be soothed by closing in the presence of her child; but till then, I think, her wretchedness must be aggravated by beholding that of the Marquis and his wife: theirs is that situation where comfort can neither be offered nor suggested, - hopeless and incurable is their sorrow; for, to use the beautiful and emphatic words of a late celebrated writer, "The gates of death are shut upon their prospects."

Amanda now, after a little hesitation, proceeded to inform Oscar of her real situation, and entreated him to believe that she never would have had a concealment from him, but for the fear of giving him uneasiness. He folded her to his bosom as she ceased speaking, declared he rejoiced and congratulated her on having found an object so well qualified to make her happy.

"But where is this dear creature?" cried Oscar, with some gaiety, "am I to search for him, like a favourite Sylph in your bouquet, or with more probability of success, seek him amongst the shades of the garden?" "Come," said he, "your looks confess our search will not be troublesome." He led her to the garden. Lord Mortimer, who had lingered near it, saw them approaching. Amanda motioned to him to meet them. He sprang forward, and was instantly introduced by her to Lord Dunreath. The reception he met from him was perhaps one of the most flattering proofs he could receive of his Amanda's affection: for what but the most animated expressions in his favour could have made Lord Dunreath, at the first introduction, address him with all the fervency of friendship! Extremes of joy and sorrow, are difficult to describe; I shall, therefore, as perfectly conscious of my inability to do justice to the scene which followed this introduction, pass it over in silence. Lord Dunreath had ordered his equipage and attendants to the village inn, where he

himself intended to lodge; but this was prevented by Lord Cherbury, who informed him he could be accommodated at his steward's; it was here, when they had retired for the night, that Lord Cherbury, having intimated his wishes for an immediate union with Amanda, all the necessary preliminaries were talked over and adjusted, and it was agreed the marriage should take place at the cottage, from whence they should immediately proceed to Lady Martha's, and that to procure a licence they should both depart the next morning: at breakfast, therefore, Amanda was apprised of their plan, though the glow of modesty overspread her face, she did not with affectation object to it.

With greater expedition than Amanda expected, the travellers returned from the journey they had been obliged to take, and at their earnest and united request, without any affectation of modesty, though with its real feelings, Amanda consented that the marriage should take place the day but one after their return.

Howel was sent for, and informed of the hour his services would be required. His mild eyes evinced to Amanda his sincere joy at the termination of her sorrows.

On the destined morning, Lord Dunreath and his friend went over to the cottage, and in a few minutes were joined by their Amanda, the perfect model of innocence and beauty. She looked, indeed, the child of sweet simplicity, arrayed with the unstudied elegance of a village maid: she had no ornaments but those which could never decay, namely, modesty and meekness.

Language was inadequate to express the feelings of Lord Cherbury; his fine eyes, alone, could do them justice; alone reveal what might be termed the sacred triumph of his soul, at gaining such a woman. A soft shade of melancholy stole over the fine features of Lord Dunreath, as he witnessed the

happiness of Lord Cherbury; for as his happiness, so might his own have been, but for the blackest perfidy.

As Lord Cherbury took the trembling hand of Amanda, to lead her from the cottage, she gave a farewell sigh to a place, where it might be said her happiness had commenced, and was completed.

They walked to the church, followed by the nurse and her family. Some kind hand had strewed Lady Malvina's grave with the gayest flowers, and when Amanda reached it, she paused involuntarily for a moment to invoke the spirits of her parents to bless her union.

Howel was already in the church, waiting to receive them, and the ceremony was begun without delay. With the truest pleasure did Lord Dunreath give his lovely sister to Lord Cherbury; and with the liveliest transport did he receive her as the choicest gift heaven could bestow.

Tears of sweet sensibility fell from Amanda, as Lord Cherbury folded her to his bosom as his own Amanda. Nor was he less affected; joy of the most rapturous kind agitated his whole soul, at the completion of an event so earnestly desired, but so long despaired of. He wiped away her tears, and when she had received the congratulations of her brother, presented her to the rest of the little group. Their delight, particularly the nurse's, was almost too great for expression.

"Well," she said, sobbing, "thank God her wish was fulfilled; it had been her prayer, night, noon and morn, to see the daughter of her tear, tear Captain Fitzalan greatly married."

Poor Ellen wept; "Well, now she should be happy," she said, "since she knew her tear young lady was so."

Amanda, affected by the artless testimonies of affection she received, could only smile upon the faithful creatures.

Lord Cherbury, seeing her unable to speak, took her hand, and said, "Lord Cherbury never would forget the obligations conferred upon Miss Fitzalan."

Bridal favours and presents had already been distributed among the Edwins. Howel was handsomely complimented on the occasion, and received some valuable presents from Lord Cherbury, as proofs of his sincere friendship; also money to distribute among the indigent villagers.

His Lordship then handed Amanda into his coach, already prepared for its journey to Thornbury, and the little bridal party were followed with the most ardent blessings.

After proceeding a quarter of a mile, they reached Tudor-Hall.

"I wish, my Lord," cried Oscar, as they were driving round the wood, "you would permit me to stop and view the Hall, and also accompany me to it."

Lord Cherbury looked a little embarrassed: he felt a strong reluctance to visit it when no longer his; yet he could not think of refusing the Earl.

Amanda knew his feelings, and wished her brother had not made such a request. No opposition, however, being shewn to it, they stopt at the gate which opened into the avenue, and alighted. This was a long beautiful walk cut through the wood, and in a direct line with the house. On either side were little grassy banks, now covered with a profusion of of gay flowers, and a thick row of trees, which waving their old fantastic branches on high, formed a most delightful shade. Honey-suckles twined around many of the trunks, forming, in some places, luxuriant canopies, and with a variety of aromatic shrubs, quite perfumed the air.

It was yet an early hour, the dew, therefore, still sparkled upon the grass, and every thing looked in the highest verdure. Through vistas in the wood, a fine clear river was seen, along whose sides beautiful green slopes were stretched, scattered over with

flocks, that spread their swelling treasures to the sun. The birds sung sweetly in the embowering recesses of the wood, and so calm, so lovely did the place appear, that Lord Cherbury could not refrain a sigh for its loss.

"How delighted," cried he, casting his fine eyes around, "should I have been, still to have cherished these old trees, beneath whose shades some of my happiest hours were past!"

They entered the hall, whose folding door they found open. It was large and gothic; a row of arched windows were on either side, whose recesses were filled with myrtles, roses, and geraniums, which emitted a delicious perfume, and contrasted with the white walls, gave an appearance of the greatest gaiety to the place.

Oscar led the way to a spacious parlour at the end of the hall; but how impossible to describe the surprise and pleasure of Lord and Lady Cherbury, on entering it, at beholding Lady Martha, and Lady Araminta Dormer.

Lord Cherbury stood transfixed like a statue; the caresses of his Aunt and his sister, which were shared between him and his bride, restored him to animation; but while he returned them, he cast his eyes upon Oscar, and demanded an explanation of the scene.

"I shall give no explanation, my Lord," cried Oscar, "till you welcome your friends to your house."

"My house!" repeated Lord Cherbury, staring at him.

Lord Dunreath approached; never had he appeared so engaging; the benignant expression his countenance assumed, was such as we may suppose an angel sent from heaven, on benevolent purposes to man, would wear.

"Excuse me, my dear Cherbury," said he, "for suffering you to feel any uneasiness which I could remove; I only did so from an idea of increasing

your pleasure hereafter. In Scotland I was informed of your predilection for my sister, by Lady Grey-stock, who, I fancy you have both some reason to remember, in consequence of which on seeing Tudor-Hall advertised, I begged Sir Charles Bingley to purchase it for me, in his own name, from a presentiment I had, that the event I now rejoice at, would take place; and from my wish of having a nuptial present for my sister, worthy of her acceptance; let me," continued he, taking a hand of each, and joining them together, "let me, in this respected mansion, and in the dear presence of those you love, again wish you a continuance of every blessing. May this seat, as heretofore, be the scene of domestic happiness; may it ever be the pleasing abode to the prosperous, and an asylum of comfort to the afflicted."

Lord Cherbury's heart was too full for words; he turned aside to wipe away his starting tears.—At last, though in a broken voice, he said, "I cannot speak my feelings," "Pain me not," cried Oscar, "by attempting to do so. From this moment forget that Tudor-Hall was ever out of your possession, or, if you must remember it, think it restored to you with an incumbrance, which half the fashionable men in England would give an estate to get rid of, and this will conquer your too refined feelings."

Lord Cherbury smiled as he looked at the lovely incumbrance which Oscar alluded to.

"And what shall I say to my brother?" cried Amanda, throwing herself into his arms. "Why, that you will compose your spirits, and endeavour to give a proper welcome to your friend." He presented her to Lady Martha and Lady Araminta, who again embraced and congratulated her. He then led her to the head of the breakfast table, which was elegantly laid out. The timid bride was assisted in doing the honours by her brother and Lord Cherbury. Lady Martha beheld the youthful pair with the truest delight; never had she before seen two, from equal me-

rit and loveliness, so justly formed to make each other happy ; never had she seen either to such advantage, the beautiful colouring of health and modesty tinged the soft cheeks of Amanda, and her eyes, through their long lashes, emitted mild beams of pleasure ; its brightest glow mantled the cheeks of Lord Cherbury, and his eyes were again illumined with all their wonted radiancy.

Oscar was requested to tell particularly how he had arranged his plan, which he accordingly did. He had written to the ladies at Thornbury, informing them of his scheme, and requesting their presence, and on the preceding night they had arrived at the Hall. Lord Dunreath also added, that from a certainty of its being agreeable to Lord Cherbury, he had directed the steward to reinstate the old servants in their former stations, and also to invite the tenants to a nuptial feast.

Lord Cherbury assured him he had done what was truly grateful to his feelings ; a ramble about the garden and shrubberies was proposed, and agreed to after breakfast ; in the hall and avenue the servants and tenants were already assembled.—Lord Cherbury went among them all, and the grateful joy they expressed at having him again for a master and a landlord deeply affected his feelings. He thanked them for their regard, and received their congratulations, on his present happiness, with that sweetness and affability which ever distinguished his manners. The ramble was delightful. When the sun had attained its meridian, they sought the cool shade, and retired to a little romantic arbour, o'er-canopied with woodbines, where, as if by the hand of enchantment, they found refreshments laid out ; they did not return to the house till they received a summons to dinner, and had then the pleasure of seeing the tenants seated at long tables in the wood, enjoying, with unbounded mirth, the profusion with which they were covered, and Lord Cherbury begged Amanda

to observe her nurse seated at the head of one of these tables with an air of the greatest self-importance. The pride and vanity of this good woman (and she always possessed a large share of both) had been considerably increased from the time her cottage was honoured with such noble guests. When she received an invitation from the steward to accompany the rest of the tenants to the Hall to celebrate its restoration to Lord Cherbury, her joy and exultation knew no bounds; she took care to walk with the wives of some of the most respectable tenants, describing to them all that had passed at the ceremony, and how the Earl had first fallen in love with his bride at her cottage, and what trials they had undergone, no doubt, to prove their constancy. "Cotpluss their hearts," she said to her eager auditors, "She could tell them of such tangers and tifficulties, and tribulations, as would surprise the very souls in their poties. Well, well, it is now her tear child's turn to hold up her head with the highest in the land, and to pe sure she might now say, without telling a lie, that her tear Latyship would now make some poty of herself, and, please Cot, she hoped and pe-lieved, she would not tisgrace or tisparage a petter situation." When she came near the Countess, she took care to press forward for a gracious look; but this was not all, she had always envied the consequence of Mrs. Abergwilly in having so great a house as the Hall entirely under her management, and she now determined upon the strength of her favour with Lady Cherbury to have something to say to it, and of course increase her consequence among her neighbours. There was nothing on earth she so much delighted in as bustle, and the present scene was quite adapted to her taste, for all within and without the house was joyous confusion. The first specimen she gave of her intention was, in helping to distribute refreshments among the tenants; she then proceeded to the dinner parlour, to give her opinion and assist-

ance, and directions about laying out the table. Mrs. Abergwilly, like the generality of those accustomed to absolute power, could not tamely submit to any innovation on it. She curbed her resentment, however, and civilly told Mrs. Edwin she wanted no assistance; "thank Cot," she said, "she was not come to this time of tay without being able to give proper directions about laying out a table."

Mrs. Edwin said, "To be sure Mrs. Abergwilly might have a very pretty taste, but then another person might have as good a one."

The day was intensely hot; she pinned back her gown, which was a rich silk, that had belonged to Lady Malvina, and without further ceremony, began altering the dishes, saying, "she knew the taste of her dear Lady, the Countess, better than any one else, and that she would take an early opportunity of going through the apartments, and telling Mrs. Abergwilly how to arrange the furniture."

The Welch blood of the house-keeper could bear no more, and she began abusing Mrs. Edwin, though in terms scarcely articulate; to which she replied with interest.

In the midst of this fracas, Old Edwin entered. "For the love of Cot," he asked, "and the mercy of heaven, could they chuse no other time or tay than the present to begin to fight, and scold, and abuse each other like a couple of Welch witches? what would the noble Earl and the Countess say—Oh Lort! Oh Lort! he felt himself blushing all over for their misdemeanours."

His remonstrance had an immediate effect; they were both ashamed of their conduct: their rage abated; they became friends, and Mrs. Edwin resigned the direction of the dinner table to Mrs. Abergwilly, satisfied with being allowed to preside among the tenants.

The bridal party found Howel in the dining parlour, and his company increased their pleasure,

After dinner the rustics commenced dancing in the avenue, to the strains of the harp, and afforded a delightful scene of innocent gaiety to their benevolent entertainers, who smiled to see

The dancing pair that simply sought renown
 By holding out to tire each other down :
 The bashful virgin's side-long looks of love,
 The matron's glance that would those looks reprove.

After tea the party went out amongst them, and the gentlemen, for a short time, mingled in the dance. Long it could not detain Lord Cherbury from his Amanda. Oh ! with what ecstasy did he listen to the soft accents of her voice, while his fond heart assured him she was now his ; the remembrance of past difficulties but increased his present felicity.

In the course of the week all the neighbouring families came to pay their congratulations at Tudor-Hall ; invitations were given and received, and it again became the seat of pleasure and hospitality ; but Amanda did not suffer the possession of happiness to obliterate one grateful remembrance from her mind ; she was not one of those selfish beings, who, on being what is termed settled for life, immediately contract themselves within the narrow sphere of their own enjoyments ; still was her heart as sensible as ever to the glow of friendship and compassion ; she wrote to all the friends she had ever received kindness from, in terms of the warmest gratitude, and her letters were accompanied by presents sufficiently valuable to prove her sincerity. She sent an invitation to Emily Rushbrook, which was immediately accepted ; and now a discovery took place which infinitely surprised and pleased Amanda, namely, that Howel was the young clergyman Emily was attached to. He had gone to London on a visit to the gentleman who patronized him ; her youth, her simplicity, above all, her distress, affected his heart ; and in the hope of mitigating that distress,

(which he was shocked to see had been aggravated by the ladies she came to) he had followed her; to sooth the wretched, to relieve the distressed, was not considered more a duty than a pleasure by Howel; and the little favours he conferred upon the Rushbrooks afforded, if possible, more pleasure to him than they did to them; so sweet are the feelings of benevolence and virtue. But compassion was not long the sole motive of his interest in their affairs, the amiable manners, the gentle conversation of Emily, completely subdued his unfortunate passion for Amanda, and in stealing her image from his heart she implanted her own in its place. He described, in a romantic manner, the little rural cottage he invited her to share, he anticipated the happy period when it should become an asylum to her parents — when he, like a second father, should assist their children through the devious paths of life; these fond hopes and expectations vanished the moment he received Mrs. Connel's letter. He could not think of sacrificing the interest of Rushbrook to the consideration of his own happiness, and therefore generously, but with the most agonizing conflicts, resigned his Emily to a more prosperous rival; his joy at finding her disengaged, still his own unaltered Emily, can better be conceived than described. He pointed out the little sheltered cottage which again he hoped she would share, and blest with her, the hand that had opened her father's prison gates. — Lord and Lady Cherbury delighted to think they could contribute to the felicity of two such amiable beings. And the latter wrote to captain and Mrs. Rushbrook on the subject, who immediately replied to her letter, declaring that their fondest wish would be gratified in bestowing their daughter on Howel. They were accordingly invited to the Hall, and in the same spot where a month before he ratified the vows of Lord Cherbury and Amanda, did Howel plight his own Emily, who from the hand of Lady Cherbury re-

ceived a nuptial present sufficient to procure every enjoyment her humble and unassuming spirit aspired to. Her parents, after passing a few days in her cottage, departed, rejoicing at the happiness of their beloved child, and truly grateful to those who had contributed to it.

And now did the grateful children of Fitzalan amply reward the Edwins for their past kindnesses to their parents and themselves; an annual stipend was settled on Edwin by Lord Dunreath, and the possessions of Ellen were enlarged by Amanda. Now was realized every scheme of domestic happiness she had ever formed; but even that happiness could not alleviate her feelings on Oscar's account, whose faded cheek, whose languid eye, whose total abstraction in the midst of company, evidently proved the state of his heart; and the tear of regret, which had so often fallen for her own sorrows, was now shed for his; he had written to Mrs. Marlowe a particular account of every thing which had befallen him since their separation; she answered his letter immediately, and after congratulating him in the warmest terms on the change in his situation, informed him that Adela was then at one of Belgrave's seats in England, and that he was gone to the continent; her style was melancholy, and she concluded her letter in these words: "No longer, my dear Oscar, is my fire-side enlivened by gaiety or friendship: sad and solitary I sit within my cottage till my heart sickens at the remembrance of past scenes, and if I wander from it, the objects without, if possible, add to the bitterness of that remembrance. The closed windows, the grass-grown paths, the dejected servants of Wood-lawn, all recall to my mind those hours, when it was the mansion of hospitality and pleasure."

CHAPTER LIV.

"The modest virtues mingled in her eyes,
 Still on the ground dejected, darting all
 Their humid beams into the opening flowers;
 Or when she thought—
 Of what her faithless fortune promis'd once!
 They like the dewy star
 Of evening, shone in tears.

Thomson."

ADELA, on the death of her father, was taken by Belgrave to England; though the only pleasure he experienced in removing her was derived from the idea of wounding her feelings, by separating her from Mrs. Marlowe, whom he knew she was tenderly attached to. From his connections in London she was compelled to mix in society; compelled, I say, for the natural gaiety of her soul was quite gone, and that solitude, which permitted her to brood over the remembrance of past days was the only happiness she was capable of enjoying. When the terrors of Belgrave drove him from the kingdom, he had her removed to Wood-house, to which it may be remembered he had once brought Amanda, and from which the imperious woman who then ruled was removed; but the principal domestic was equally harsh and insolent in her manner, and to her care the unfortunate Adela was consigned, with strict orders, that she should not be allowed to receive any company, or correspond with any being.—Accustomed from her earliest youth to the greatest tenderness, this severity plunged her in the deepest despondency, and life was a burthen she would gladly have resigned; her melancholy, or rather her patient sweetness, at last softened the flinty nature of her governante, and she was permitted to extend her walks beyond the gardens, to which they had hitherto been confined; but she availed herself of this permission only to visit

the church-yard belonging to the hamlet, whose old yew-trees she had often seen waving from the windows.—Beneath their solemn gloom she loved to sit, while evening closed around her; and in a spot, sequestered from every human eye, weep over the recollection of that father she had lost, that friend she was separated from.

She remained in the church-yard one night beyond her usual hour. The soft beams of the moon alone prevented her from being involved in darkness, and the plaintive breathings of a flute from the hamlet just stole upon her ear.—Lost in sadness, her head resting upon her hand, she forgot the progress of time; when suddenly she beheld a form rising from a neighbouring grave. She started up, screamed, but had not power to move; the form advanced to her; it was the figure of a venerable man, who gently exclaimed, “Be not afraid!” His voice dissipated the involuntary fears of Adela; but still she trembled so much she could not move.—“I thought,” cried he, gazing on her, “this place had been alone the haunt of wretchedness and me.” “If sacred to sorrow,” exclaimed Adela, “I well may claim the privilege of entering it.”—She spoke involuntarily, and her words seemed to affect the stranger deeply. “So young,” said he, “it’s melancholy indeed; but still the sorrows of youth are more bearable than those of age: because like age it has not out-lived the fond ties, the sweet connexions of life.” “Alas!” cried Adela, unable to repress her feelings, “I am separated from all I regarded. The stranger leaned pensively against a tree for a few minutes, and then again addressed her: “’Tis a late hour,” said he, “suffer me to conduct you home, and also permit me to ask, if I may see you to-morrow night.—Your youth, your manner, your dejection, all interest me deeply; the sorrows of youth are often increased by imagination.—You will say that nothing can exceed its pains; ’tis true—but it is a weakness to yield to them—a weakness which from a sensible mind will

be eradicated the moment it hears of the real calamities of life; such a relation I can give you, if you meet me to-morrow night, in this sad, this solitary spot; a spot I have visited every closing evening, without ever before meeting a being in it."

His venerable looks, his gentle, his pathetic manner, affected Adela inexpressibly; she gazed on him with emotions somewhat similar to those with which she used to contemplate the mild features of her father.—“I will meet you,” cried she, “but my sorrows are not imaginary.—She refused to let him attend her home; and in this incident there was something affecting and romantic, which soothed and engrossed the mind.

She was punctual the next evening to the appointed hour.—The stranger was already in the churchyard; he seated her at the head of the grave from which she had seen him rise the preceding night, and which was only distinguished from the others by a few flowering shrubs planted round it, and began his promised narrative.—Adela also told him her own situation—“The wife of Belgrave!” he repeated; “then I wonder not,” continued he, as if involuntary, “at your sorrows. It was indeed to Howel, the unfortunate father of Juliana, that Adela had been addressing herself.—He checked himself, however, and told her, that the being, by whose grave they sat, had been hurried, through the villainy of Belgrave, to that grave.

The ensuing morning she was disturbed from her sleep by a violent noise in the house, as of people running backwards and forwards in confusion and distress. She was hurrying on her clothes, to go and inquire into the occasion of it, when a servant rushed into the room, and in a hasty manner told her that Colonel Belgrave was dead.—Struck with horror and amazement, Adela stood petrified, gazing on her; the maid repeated her words, and added, that he had died abroad, and his remains were brought over to

Wood-house for interment, attended by a French gentleman, who looked like a priest.—The various emotions which assailed the heart of Adela at this moment, were to much for her weak frame, and she would have fallen to the floor but for the maid.—It was some time ere she recovered her sensibility, and when she did regain it, she was still so agitated as to be unable to give those directions, which the domestics, who now looked up to her in a light very different from what they had hitherto done, demanded from her.—All she could desire was, that the steward should pay every respect and attention to the gentleman who had attended the remains of his master, and have every honour that was due shewn to those remains. To suppose she regretted Belgrave would be unnatural: but she felt horror, mingled with a degree of pity, for his untimely fate—at the idea of his dying abroad, without one connection, one friend near him.

His last moments were indeed more wretched than she could conceive.—Overwhelmed with terror and grief, he had quitted England; terror at the supposition of a crime which in reality he had not committed, and grief for the fate of Amanda, he sought to lose his horrors in inebriety; but this, joined to the agitations of his mind, brought on a violent fever, by the time he had landed at Calais, in the paroxysms of which, had the attendants understood his language, they would have been shocked at the crimes he revealed. His senses were restored a short time before he died; but what excruciating anguish, as well as horror, did he suffer from their restoration! he knew from his own feelings, as well as from the looks of his attendants, that his last moments were approaching; and the recollection of past actions made him shudder at those moments. Every treacherous action now rose to view, and trembling, he groaned with terror at the spectres which a guilty conscience raised around him.—Death would have been a relief, could he have considered it

an annihilation of all existence; but that future world he had always derided, that world was opening in all its awful horrors to his view. Already he saw himself before its sacred judge, surrounded by the accusing spirits of those he had injured. He desired a clergyman to be brought to him; a priest was sent for; their faiths were different, but still as a man of God, Belgrave applied to him for an alleviation of his tortures.---The priest was superstitious, and ere he tried to comfort, he wished to convert; but scarcely had he commenced the attempt, ere the wretched being before him clasped his hands together in a strong convulsion, and expired.--The English servant, who attended Belgrave, informed the people of the hotel of his rank and fortune, and the priest offered to accompany his remains to England. He was, by the direction of Adela, who had not resolution to see him, amply rewarded for his attention, and in two days after their arrival at Woodhouse, the remains of Belgrave were consigned to their kindred earth.

Adela now sent for Howel: and informed him she meant immediately to return to Ireland. She accordingly commenced her journey the ensuing day, and in less than a week reached the dear and destined spot so interesting to her; and Adela went alone into Mrs. Marlowe's cottage, sad and solitary, as Mrs. Marlowe said in her letter to Oscar, did Adela find her in her parlour; but it was a sadness which vanished the moment she beheld her.—With all the tenderness of a mother she clasped Adela to her breast, and in the sudden transports of joy and surprise, for many minutes did not notice her dress; but when she did observe it, what powerful emotions did it excite in her breast! Adela, scarcely less agitated than she was, could not for many minutes relate all that had happened; Mrs. Marlowe wept while she related her sufferings.

Adela consented to stay that night in the cottage; but the next day she determined on going to Wood-

lawn: to think she should again wander through it, again linger in the walks she had trodden with those she loved, gave to her mind a melancholy pleasure. The next morning, attended by her friend, she repaired to it, and was inexpressibly affected by reviewing scenes endeared by tender remembrance of happier hours. The house, from its closed windows, appeared quite neglected and melancholy, as if pleasure had forsaken it with the poor departed General. Standard, his favourite horse, grazed on the lawn; and beside him, as if a secret sympathy endeared them to each other, stood the dog that had always attended the General in his walks; it instantly recollected Adela, and running to her, licked her hand, and evinced the utmost joy. She patted him on the head, while her tears burst forth at the idea of him who had been his master. The transports of the old domestics, particularly of the grey-headed butler, at her unexpected return, increased her tears. But when she entered the parlour, in which her father usually sat, she was quite overcome, and motioning with her hand, for her friends not to mind her, she retired to the garden. There was a little romantic root-house at the termination of it, where she and Oscar had passed many happy hours together; thither she repaired, and his idea thus revived in her mind, did not lessen its dejection.—While she sat within it, indulging her sorrow, her eye caught some lines inscribed on one of its windows. She hastily arose, and examining them, instantly recollected the hand of Oscar. They were as follows:

Adieu, sweet girl, a last adieu!

We part to meet no more;

Adieu to peace, to hope, to you,

And to my native shore.

If fortune had propitious smil'd,

My love had made me blest;

But she, like me, is sorrow's child,

By sadness dire opprest.

I go to India's sultry clime,
Oh! never to return;
Beneath some lone embow'ring lime
Will be my soldier's urn.

No kindred spirit there shall weep,
Or pensive musing stray;
My image thou alone wilt keep,
And grief's soft tribute pay.

Oscar previous to his going to England, with the expectation of being sent to the West Indies, had paid a secret visit to Wood-lawn, to review and bid adieu to every well-known and beloved spot, and had, one morning, at early day, inscribed these lines on a window in the root-house, prompted by a tender melancholy he could not resist.

"His love is then unfortunate," said Adela, pensively leaning her head upon her hand; "Oh, Oscar! how sad a similtude is there between your fate and mine!" She returned to the house. Mrs. Marlowe had consented to stay some time with her.—Oscar's lines run in her head the whole day; and in the evening she again stole out to read them.

She had been absent some time, when Mrs. Marlowe came out to her; Adela blushed and started, at being caught at the window.—" 'Tis a long time, my dear Adela," said Mrs. Marlowe, "since we had a ramble in this delightful garden together; indulge me in taking one, and let us talk of past times." "Past times!" cried Adela, with a faint smile, "are not always the pleasiest to talk about."—"There are some, at least one friend," cried Mrs. Marlowe, "whom you have not yet inquired after."—Adela's heart suddenly palpitated; she guessed who that one friend was.—"Oscar Fitzalan, surely," continued Mrs. Marlowe, "merits an enquiry; I have good news to tell you of him; therefore, without chiding you for any seeming neglect, I will reveal it." She accordingly related his late reverse of situation. Adela heard her with deep attention. "Since fortune then

is propitious at last," cried she, "his love will no longer be unfortunate."—" 'Tis time, indeed," said Mrs. Marlowe, looking at her with pleasure, "that love, so pure, so constant as his, should be rewarded. Oh! Adela," she continued, suddenly taking her hand, "sweet daughter of my care, how great is my happiness at this moment, to think of that about to be your portion!" "My happiness!" exclaimed Adela, in a dejected voice.—"Yes," replied Mrs. Marlowe, "in your union with a man every way worthy of possessing you; a man, who, from the first moment he beheld you, has never ceased to love—in short, with Oscar Fitzalan himself." "Impossible!" cried Adela, trembling with emotion as she spoke. "Did not—how humiliating is the remembrance! did not Oscar Fitzalan reject me, when the too generous and romantic spirit of my beloved father offered my hand to his acceptance?" "For once," said Mrs. Marlowe, "I must disturb the sacred ashes of the dead, to prevent the innocent from being unhappy. Oh! Adela, you were cruelly deceived: and the moment which gave you to Belgrave, rendered Oscar the most wretched of mankind.—My heart was the repository of all his griefs, and how many are the bitter tears I have shed over them!—Be composed," continued she, seeing Adela's agitation, "and a few moments will explain every thing to you."—She led her back to the root-house, and in a most explicit manner informed her of Belgrave's treachery.—Adela burst into tears as she concluded.—She wept on Mrs. Marlowe's bosom, and acknowledged she had removed a weight of uneasiness from her mind.—"Poor Oscar!" she continued, "how much would the knowledge of his misery have aggravated mine!" "He acted nobly," said Mrs. Marlowe, "in concealing it; and amply will he be rewarded for such conduct." She then proceeded to inform Adela that she soon expected a visit from him.—There was something in her look and manner which instantly excited the

suspicion of Adela, who blushing, starting, trembling, exclaimed—"He is already come!" Mrs. Marlowe smiled, and a tear fell from her upon the soft hand of Adela. "He is already come," she repeated, "and he waits, Oh, how impatiently, to behold his Adela."

We may believe his patience was not put to a much longer test. But when Adela in reality beheld him as she entered the parlour, and where he waited for the reappearance of her friend, she sunk beneath her emotion, upon that faithful bosom which had so long suffered the most excruciating pangs on her account; and it was many minutes ere she was sensible of the soft voice of Oscar. Oh! who shall paint his transports, after all his sufferings, to be thus rewarded! but in the midst of his happiness, the idea of the poor General, who had so generously planned it, struck upon his heart with a pang of sorrow. "Oh! my Adela!" he cried clasping her to his heart, as if doubly endeared by the remembrance, "is Oscar at last permitted to pour forth the fulness of his soul before you, to reveal its tenderness, to indulge the hope of calling you his - a hope which affords the delightful prospect of being able to contribute to your felicity? Yes, most generous of friends!" he exclaimed, raising his eyes to a picture of the General, "I will endeavour to evince my gratitude to you by my conduct to your child." Oh! how did the tear he shed to the memory of her father interest the heart of Adela! her own fell with it, and she felt that the presence of that Being to whom they were consecrated, was alone wanting to complete their happiness. It was long ere she was sufficiently composed to inquire the reason of Oscar's sudden appearance, and still longer ere he could inform her. - Mrs. Marlowe's melancholy letter he at last said had brought him over, with the hope of being able to cheer her solitude and also (he acknowledged) his own dejection by mutual sympathy; from her cottage he had been directed to

Wood-lawn, and at Wood-lawn received particulars, not only of her happiness, but his own. Adela, who had never yet deviated from propriety, would not now infringe it, and resolutely determined, till the expiration of her mourning, not to bestow her hand on Oscar; but permitted him to hope, that in the intervening space, most of his time might be devoted to her. It was necessary however to sanction that hope by having proper society. Oscar therefore requested and obtained permission from Adela, to write in her name to Lord and Lady Cherbury, and entreat their company at Wood-lawn, promising she would then accompany them to Castle Carberry, and from thence to Dunreath-Abbey, a tour which, previous to Oscar's leaving Wales, had been agreed on. The invitation was accepted, and in a few days Oscar beheld the two beings, most valued by him in the world, introduced to each other! tears of rapture started to his eyes, as he saw his Adela folded to the bosom of his lovely sister, who called her the sweet restorer of her brother's happiness! Lord Cherbury was already acquainted with her, and, next to his Amanda, considered her the loveliest of human beings and Lady Martha, and Lady Araminta, who were also invited to Wood-lawn, regarded her in the same light.

About three weeks after, the whole party proceeded to Castle Carberry. Amanda could not re-enter it without emotions of the most painful nature; she recollected the moment in which she had quitted it, opprest with sorrow and sickness, to attend the closing period of a father's life. She wept and sighed to think that the happiness he had prayed for he could not behold.—Lord Cherbury saw her emotions, and soothed them with the softest tenderness; it was due to that tenderness to conquer her dejection, and in future the remembrance of her father was only attended with a pleasing melancholy. She did not delay visiting the convent; the good-natured nuns

crowded around her, and cried, laughed and wished her joy, almost in the same moment, particularly Sister Mary; the prioress's pleasure was of a less violent, but more affecting nature: an almost constant scene of gaiety was kept up at the castle, a gaiety however which did not prevent Lord and Lady Cherbury from inspecting into the situation of their poor tenants, whose wants they relieved, whose grievances they redressed, and whose hearts they cheered by a promise of spending some months in every year at the castle. After continuing at it six weeks, they crossed over to Port-Patrick, and from thence proceeded to Dunreath Abbey, which had been completely repaired, and furnished in a style equally modern and elegant; and here it was determined they should remain till the solemnization of Lord Dunreath's nuptials. The time which intervened till the period appointed for them, was agreeably diversified, by parties amongst the neighbouring families, and excursions about the country; but no hours were happier than those which the inhabitants of the Abbey passed when free from company, so truly were they united to each other by affection. Lord Dunreath, soon after his return, waited upon the Marquis of Rosline, and by his sister's desire, signified to him that if a visit from her would be agreeable to the Marquis, she would pay it; this however was declined; and about the same period Lady Dunreath died. Mrs. Bruce, who, from long habit, she was attached to, then retired to another part of Scotland, ashamed to remain where her conduct was known—a conduct which deeply affected her neice, whom Amanda visited immediately after her arrival, and found settled in a neat house near the town she had lodged in. She received Lady Cherbury with every demonstration of real pleasure, and both she and her little girls spent some time with her at the Abbey.

The happy period for completing the felicity of Oscar at last arrived. In the chapel where his pa-

rents were united, he received from the hand of Lord Cherbury, the lovely object of his long-tryed affections. The ceremony was only witnessed by his own particular friends : but at dinner all the neighbouring families were assembled, and the tenants were entertained in the great hall, where dancing commenced at an early, and was continued to a late hour. And now having (to use the words of Adam) brought our story to the sum of earthly bliss, we shall conclude first giving a brief account of the characters connected with it.

Lady Greystock, as one of the most distinguished, we shall first mention.—After the death of Lady Euphrasia, she found her company no longer desired at the Marquis's, and accordingly repaired to Bath ; here she had not been long ere she became acquainted with a set of female puritans, who soon wrought a total change (I will not say a reformation) in her Ladyship's sentiments : and to give a convincing proof of this change, she was prevailed on to give her hand to one of their spruce young preachers, who shortly taught her, what indeed she had long wanted to learn the doctrine of repentance ; for most sincerely did she repent putting herself into his power. Vexation, disappointment, and grief, brought on a lingering illness, from which she never recovered ; when convinced she was dying, she sent for Rushbrook, and made a full confession of her treachery and injustice to him, in consequence of which he took immediate possession of his uncle's fortune ; and thus, in the evening of his life, enjoyed a full recompence for the trials of its early period.—Lady Greystock died with some degree of satisfaction at the idea of disappointing her husband of the fortune she was convinced that he had married her for.

The happiness of Howel and his Emily, is as perfect as happiness can be in this sublunary state.

Sir Charles Bingley, after studiously avoiding Lord and Lady Cherbury for above two years, at last

by chance, was thrown in their way, and then had the pleasure of finding he was not as agitated by the sight of Amanda as he had dreaded. He did not refuse the invitations of Lord Cherbury; the domestic happiness he saw him enjoying, rendered his own unconnected and wandering life more unpleasant than ever to him.—Lady Araminta Dormer was almost constantly in his company; no longer fascinated by Amanda, he could now see and admire her perfections; he soon made known his admiration; the declaration was not ungraciously received, and he offered his hand, and was accepted—an acceptance which put him in possession of happiness fully equal to Lord Cherbury's.

The Marquis and Marchioness of Rosline pass their days in gloomy retirement, regretful of the past and hopeless of the future. Freeloze flutters about every public place, boasts of having carried off a Scotch heiress, and thinks from that circumstance, he may now lay siege to any female heart with a certainty of being successful.

To return once more to the sweet descendants of the Dunreath family: the goodness of heart, the simplicity of manners which ever distinguished them, they still retain; from having been children of sorrow themselves, they feel for all who come under that denomination, and their charity is at once bestowed as a tribute from gratitude to Heaven, and from humanity to want; from gratitude to that Being who watched their unsheltered youth, who guarded them through innumerable perils, who placed them on the summit of prosperity, from whence, by dispensing his gifts around, they trust to be translated to a still greater height of happiness. Lady Dunreath's wish is fulfilled; to use her words, their past sorrows are only remembered to teach them pity for the woes of others; their virtues have added to the renown of their ancestors, and entailed peace upon their own souls; their children, by all connected with

them, are considered as blessings: gratitude has already consecrated their names, and their example inspired others with emulation to pursue their courses

THE END.

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